

ARISTOTLE'S THEORY OF CONDUCT

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BY

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PREFACE

IN the following pages an attempt is made to present Aristotle's *Ethics* in a readable shape. It is not, and cannot be made, a popular book. It has not the charm of style and the dramatic vivacity of the Platonic dialogues which fascinate the reader and carry him, even in a translation, through many pages of not always profitable dialectics, but its subject is of universal interest and touches human nature on almost every side. Courage, self-restraint, liberality, behaviour in society, friendship and happiness—these are matters on which it is well worth anybody's while to know the views of a man of Aristotle's attainments. The *Ethics* is, however, something more than a volume of independent essays on moral philosophy; it is a systematic treatise on that subject forming an integral part of a comprehensive system in which logic, physics, psychology, biology, as well as the philosophy relating to man are embraced. Conduct in life is made to fall into its place as a part of Aristotle's encyclopædia of the sciences, and its principles are shown to depend upon, and are constantly referred back to, those on which organic life and mind depend. But it is chiefly as a practical treatise or manual of daily conduct that the *Ethics* may be read with profit. In it motives are analysed and actions described and defined with great skill and clearness.

Nowhere, perhaps, within an equal number of pages, can more shrewd observations on character be found, neither in the Characters of Theophrastus nor in Bacon's essays, a work with which the Ethics, on its practical side, has much in common. Notwithstanding some rather serious defects of form and arrangement, it is still the best general introduction to moral philosophy, the earliest and, take it for all in all, the most interesting book on the subject.

Aristotle's work is, nevertheless, not much known outside the limited circle of Greek scholars. At Oxford and elsewhere it is a text-book for the Arts degree, but it is necessarily imperfectly understood by those who are entering upon life, and it is rarely re-read at an age when it would be fully comprehended; to the ordinary reader it is a closed book. There are, no doubt, excellent translations in our own and other languages, but the Ethics cannot be appreciated - it can hardly be made intelligible in a translation, however good. Not only is the writing frequently abrupt and the language highly technical, but Aristotle assumes his readers to know much which only a learned reader does know, and explanations, often of some length, are constantly necessary. Moreover, its text, arrangement and numerous repetitions make its meaning in places difficult and sometimes a matter of guesswork. A translator is bound to follow his original, and his version reproduces the defects and obscurities as well as the merits of his author.

An attempt is made in this book to surmount these difficulties, (a) by a general introduction in which the purport of the Ethics is summarily set forth; (b) by special introductions to the several chapters, with explanatory remarks at the end of each chapter; (c) by a paraphrase of the text---sometimes full, sometimes condensed, in which repeated passages are left out and some liberties are taken in way of omission and transposition;

(d) by the use of modern examples for the sake of bringing Aristotle's meaning home to present-day readers. Those who may be inclined to resent the use of homely and familiar illustrations to a great classic, may be reminded that Aristotle himself is fond of borrowing from the common events of everyday life, from the gossip of society and the market as well as from his own extensive reading, to illustrate his meaning.

The view taken of Aristotle's Ethical theory in the following pages makes no attempt to soften or explain away the fundamental differences between him and Plato on the main problems of science. There are many to whom it seems intolerable that these two great pillars of philosophy should not stand square and even. Still, it requires some ingenuity, together with no small faith in the "idea," to get over the criticism of Plato's method and principles contained in the *Metaphysics*, in the *Ethics*, and elsewhere. There are, and always have been, writers ready to undertake this task—with what success impartial readers, if any can be found, must judge. Plato's idea of "the good" reappears in Kant's *Ethics* as the idea of Reason formally determining the conception of Duty, and hence it is not surprising that the modern advocates of a Platonised *Ethics* are usually adherents of Kant. The present writer suggests that neither the Kantian conception of Duty nor the Platonic one of an absolute standard in morals can be reconciled with Aristotle's language, or made to fit in with the political aims which dominate the *Ethics*. Fortunately the value of the book does not depend on the way in which these questions are answered. It is as a practical treatise that its author recommends it to public teachers and statesmen, and on its practical side it is undeniably of extraordinary merit. Every one must admire the high standard of conduct which Aristotle sets up; his sincere love of truth and the general excellence of his social and political aims. His

assumptions will of course be judged differently by those who take a physical or a metaphysical view of moral obligation, but there is not room for much difference of opinion on the general tendency of his teaching.

Aristotle's own language is often clearer and almost always more impressive than a translation, and for this reason it is pretty freely quoted. From a literary point of view he is at his best in the incisive epigrammatic sentences with which his works, and notably the *Ethics*, abound, and many of his apothegms will be found in the notes to this book. In the art of condensation he has few rivals; of the golden stream of eloquence which Cicero so much admired but few examples are to be found in the writings which have survived to our time, although passages may be found in the *Ethics* which for literary finish and impressive manly eloquence are not easily surpassed even in Greek literature.

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

NOTE.

OWING to causes for which the author is not entirely responsible, some of the sheets of this book went to Press before they were finally revised, with the result that there are several misprints in the Greek notes. For these, and for any other inaccuracies in the work, the reader's indulgence is asked.

Corrigenda.

Page 213, line 8. For "univocal and not equivocal" *read* "equivocal and not univocal."

Page 279, note 12. For "univocal" *read* "equivocal."

Page 402. *Read* note 39 as part of note 37.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

I.

THE lectures on which the Nicomachæan Ethics were founded were delivered by Aristotle at his School in the Lykæum at Athens between 335 and 323 B.C., he being at that time between fifty and sixty years old. For fifteen years before 335 B.C. he had resided at Athens as a pupil of Plato. On the death of Plato in 347 B.C. he left Athens, returning twelve years later in 335 B.C., when he opened a School on his own account in a gymnasium surrounded with plane trees attached to the temple of Apollo Lykæus in the eastern suburb of the city. Aristotle's reputation as Plato's most brilliant pupil, aided, no doubt, by the known fact that his philosophical attitude was in many respects opposed to that of his great master, soon attracted pupils and made the Lykæum a formidable rival to the Academy, conducted at that time by Xenocrates, who had succeeded Speusippus, Plato's nephew, as President or Scholiarch. Although Aristotle was on good terms with Speusippus and Xenocrates and always mentions them as well as Plato with respect, his action in setting up a School in the city in competition with the one of which he had been for many years a pupil, naturally produced some irritation and caused charges of ingratitude to be brought against Aristotle. The charges are groundless but the

feeling is not to be wondered at, for it had two sources, philosophical antagonism and business rivalry. For although the managers of the Academy and the Lykæum disclaimed any intention of making money by their teaching, establishments such as theirs could not be carried on without expense, and each School was naturally anxious, as well for its reputation as for its financial success, to secure as many pupils as possible. Their feelings to each other may be inferred from the way in which both regarded outside professors like Protagoras, Gorgias, Prodicus, and others, who periodically visited Athens and not only withdrew pupils for a time from the regular schools, but also extracted higher fees than their managers were able to obtain. Both Plato and Aristotle speak in terms of pungent criticism of the practice of these itinerant philosophers in taking fees for their teaching—Plato on the principle that philosophy has nothing to do with money, Aristotle on the narrower ground that payment ought at all events to be by results,¹ and not, as he alleged the practice to be, in advance. It is not, however, to be supposed that either at the Academy or the Lykæum the practice of free education obtained. It is a principle subject to few exceptions that nothing is to be got for nothing, and we may be sure that whether they studied under Plato or Aristotle, pupils paid either in malt or meal. In a well-known passage of the *Ethics*, Aristotle lays down what he considers to be the right principle of remuneration in these cases; "We make no charge," the Master is supposed to say to an inquiring pupil, "the value of what you will get here is not to be measured by money; still, we expect you to do what you can; think of it as a subscription to a Church, or to the maintenance

¹ *Eth.* 9. 1. 1164, a 28.

of your father and mother.”² Aristotle had not analysed human motives for nothing, and he knew perfectly well that an appeal to generosity will often succeed where an attempt at a bargain would fail. Those who have had experience of the higher branches of the legal and medical professions know how easily payments in theory purely honorary and voluntary may settle down into a tariff of charges practically as binding and certainly not less remunerative than anything which can be secured by the most active haggling in the market. Athens, then, during the period covered by Aristotle’s teaching was a University town with two flourishing Colleges competing against each other for public support. The subjects taught in both were substantially the same, although the Academy was more distinctively a mathematical and metaphysical, and the Lykæum a rhetorical and natural science school; they differed, however, in their attitude towards the subjects they taught in common, and their philosophy, and particularly their theory of knowledge, rested on a different basis. In the dearth of books, for no one except rich men could afford a library, the teaching was necessarily oral. The circle of hearers comprised not only the regular members of the school, but occasional visitors as well. For the benefit of the latter, as well as of all who required a practical education, lectures more popular in form and subject were given; and in the Lykæum at least, rhetoric and ethics probably held a leading place among the studies which appealed to this class—rhetoric supplying the form and ethics the groundwork of the art of effective public speaking, without

² οὕτω δ' ἔοικε καὶ τοῖς φιλοσοφίας κοινωνήσασιν· οὐ γὰρ πρὸς χρήμαθ' ἡ ἀξία μετρεῖται, τιμὴ τ' ἰσόρροπος οὐκ ἂν γένοιτο, ἀλλ' ἴσως ἰκανόν, καθάπερ καὶ πρὸς θεοὺς καὶ πρὸς γονεῖς, τὸ ἐνδεχόμενον. Eth. 9. 1. 1164, b 2.

which no political ambition could be gratified. In the twelve years of Aristotle's active life as a teacher he would necessarily have given several courses of lectures on these subjects. We may assume that he prepared himself in the usual way by making notes more or less full for his own use, and that his pupils wrote down for their own benefit as much as they could understand and retain. Subsequent courses on the same subject would follow the main lines of the earlier ones, but with additions and change of language and possibly also variations in the order of treatment. If we assume as an hypothesis that the *Ethics* we possess has been put together either by Aristotle himself or some leading member of his School from master's notes, supplemented where defective by the notes of pupils of distinction, and that the book so compiled was neither revised by its author nor published in his lifetime, most of its difficulties of arrangement, repetition, and inconsistency will be accounted for.

II.

Whatever may be its history, Aristotle's *Ethics* is one of the books which will never be either forgotten or superseded. It is the first attempt in any European language to formulate a comprehensive theory of conduct. The earliest Greek speculation had been occupied with physics, mathematics, and especially with the largest and most abstract problems presented by the world of matter; inquiries into the elements out of which, and the causes by which, the material universe came to exist. Aristotle tells us that Sokrates was the first to quit this field, and to insist that the proper study of mankind was man, bringing down philosophy, as has been said, from heaven

to earth.³ But Sokrates did not frame, or attempt to frame, a Science of conduct. He contented himself in the main with trying to give precision to the terms in which conduct is described, and with criticising current conceptions on the subject. He asked what we mean by Virtue, Goodness, the Beautiful, Courage, Temperance, and the like? and he had little difficulty in showing that these words were used without any clear conception of their meaning alike by the educated few and the uneducated many. His labours in this particular field were a necessary preliminary to a philosophy of conduct, and their importance can hardly be overestimated. Plato, although he used freely the material collected by Sokrates, did not put it together in systematic form. There are, indeed, few parts of ethical inquiry which he does not either touch or discuss, but he deals with the subject in fragments, now from one point of view, and now from another, in a manner highly suggestive and stimulating, but neither consistent nor methodical—"ad impellendum satis, ad edocendum parum." To Aristotle the speculations of Sokrates and Plato were invaluable, and every page of the *Ethics* shows his indebtedness to them, but he was the first to build with the material to his hand on a definite plan and to supply from his own stock many necessary parts of the structure.

The first question which meets an inquirer into the theory of conduct is to ascertain its geography, to determine its place with relation to other branches of knowledge. To Aristotle, all knowledge, "every exercise of mind" as he expresses it, takes one of three shapes; it is either theoretic, productive, or practical;⁴ we either

³ Met. i. 6. 987, b 1.

⁴ Met. 5. 1. 1025, b 25. Eth. 1. 1. 1094, a 6; 10. 8. 1178, b 20.

think, make, or do. When a state of mind terminates in another state of mind without more, we have something which falls under the head of purely intellectual activity; when thought, instead of ending in thought, has for its result the production of an object outside the thinker, we pass into the region of Art; when, finally, thought causes us to alter our personal relation to the outside world by the movement of our body or limbs, this result of our activity is called by Aristotle conduct⁵ (*πραξις*). Whatever may be thought on theoretic grounds of the distinction between art and conduct, it is strongly insisted upon by Aristotle as of practical importance.⁶

It is with conduct, then, as one branch of the threefold division of human activity that Ethics has to deal. But not all conduct falls under its domain or is fitted to be the subject of methodical treatment. Much of what we do is, or seems to be, so trivial as not to call for either criticism or remark. It does not appear to matter, and probably it does not matter, either to society or ourselves whether we eat one kind of wholesome food or another, or which of several harmless amusements we select, provided that they are equally within our means and physical strength. The only conduct which is ethically significant is conduct which is praised or blamed. Praise and blame are the indications to which Aristotle consistently appeals on the question of whether conduct is good or bad.⁷ Any conduct which is approved by the voice of

⁵ Met. 5. 1. 1025, b 22. Eth. 3. 1. 1110, a 15.

⁶ Eth. 6. 4. 1140, a 1.

⁷ ὁ μὲν γὰρ ἐπαινος τῆς ἀρετῆς· πρακτικοὶ γὰρ τῶν καλῶν ἀπὸ ταύτης. Eth. 1. 12. 1101, b 31; 1110, a 33, b 33. τῶν ἕξεων δὲ τὰς ἐπαινετὰς ἀρετὰς λέγομεν. 1103. a 9. κατὰ μὲν τὰ πάθη οὐτ' ἐπαινούμεθα οὐτε ψεγόμεθα—κατὰ δὲ τὰς ἀρετὰς καὶ τὰς κακίας ἐπαινούμεθα ἢ ψεγόμεθα. 1105, b 31.

the society in which the agent lives is in some degree morally good, and any conduct condemned by the same voice is in some degree bad. Eccentricities of dress or manner, or a want of social tact so marked as to be unfavourably observed on, are immoral on the same principle, although not in the same degree as the most flagrant deviations from the accepted standard. The rule of right conduct according to Aristotle is thus given by the consensus of opinion in the society in which the agent lives; by what people actually think and not by what the agent or any one else might wish them to think. He would not have accepted the proposition that conduct cannot be morally right unless we are prepared to will that everybody should act on it; it is morally right if everybody does act on it; nor would he have admitted that kind actions prompted by a good-natured temper have no moral value: such actions are praised, not perhaps so highly as if they were painful or disagreeable, but they commend themselves to the general judgment, and that is enough. A good-natured temper is a valuable asset in society, and society rightly thinks it desirable to encourage it.

III.

In making praise and blame the tests of conduct, it is necessarily implied that the standard is a variable one. This was one of Aristotle's marked differences from Plato, who maintained that there were certain typical forms of goodness—justice, courage, temperance, wisdom, by participation in which the moral value of an act was determined and might be authoritatively ascertained. This view Aristotle rejected, and he framed a logical theory to take its place and to explain how general propositions, including those in which our judgment on conduct is

expressed, could be framed by induction from particular instances, a view which implies that the general propositions themselves vary with the particular instances they sum up. In making public opinion the test of conduct, Aristotle assumed that the suffrage would be exercised in accordance with common sense and general experience. People have to live in a world made for them and not by them, and their opinions must, and in the long run do, fit the conditions in which they are placed. Within certain limits our conduct is prescribed for us by our organisation and by the necessity of conforming to physical surroundings from which there is no escape. The judgments of society expressed in terms of praise and blame are therefore far from arbitrary; both in logic and ethics they are conditioned by facts;⁸ there is a degree of rashness which is condemned almost everywhere, because were it habitual mankind would disappear; there is a kind of eccentricity which must in time die out. A man may, if he likes, adopt the view that fire will not burn, that it matters not what he eats or drinks, and that diseases may be cured by faith, but if he habitually acts on these opinions he is not likely to leave behind him either descendants to inherit or pupils to imitate them; so, too, some degree of truthfulness and some adherence to promises made are commended in all societies whatever because social union would be otherwise impossible. When pirates put out to sea, they do not leave the whole decalogue behind them. This is what Aristotle means when he speaks of natural virtue; but within the limits of approval of conduct which tends to maintain life and

⁸ ὥστε ἀληθεύει μὲν ὁ τὸ διηρημένον οἰόμενος διαιρῆσθαι καὶ τὸ συγκεῖμενον συγκεῖσθαι, ἔφενσται δὲ ὁ ἐναντίως ἔχων ἢ τὰ πράγματα. Met. 8. 10. 1051, b 3. De Inter. 9. 19. a 33. ὁμοίως οἱ λόγοι ἀληθεῖς ὥσπερ τὰ πράγματα.

make social union possible and disapproval of conduct inconsistent with those objects, there is room, as history and observation teach us, for wide differences of opinion, and hence the necessity of ascertaining how far it is expedient that the variations should be restrained—in other words, of determining what kinds of conduct it is wise to praise and what kinds to blame. This depends on circumstances. There are cases in which self-preservation requires the constant exercise of an ability to hold your own against enemies, and here courage and the robust qualities which make for military force demand and properly receive encouragement; and there are cases where security being assured, a noncombative character is developed and praised. Each is good in its special condition, and in those conditions neither is better than the other.

IV.

Aristotle's theory postulates social union, man being, as he insists, naturally a social animal, but it does not take account of every form of social union, at all events in its details. He does not write a world-ethics or treatise on social conduct under the varying conditions in which mankind is placed; conduct for Scythians, conduct for Persians, conduct for Macedonians lie outside its scope, which is limited to a consideration of the conduct proper for the citizens of an Hellenic city state. Its aim is practical, and directed to his own time and country. Moral virtue and vice are analysed, and the conditions of the good life are described for the behoof of the statesmen of Athens and other Hellenic cities, and as instructions to them to draft a good education Bill. The application of Aristotle's principles to what he considered to be the true end of statesmanship presupposes conditions which neither

existed in monarchies like Persia, with a vast extent of country inhabited by races of various languages and creeds, nor are to be found in any considerable modern State. He assumes a limited territory with a small population and a disposition on the part of its people to acquiesce in the exercise by Government of paternal compulsory powers of a very extreme kind. The statesman is supposed to be at liberty to prescribe not only what studies are to be followed, and what arts exercised in his state, but to fix how far individual citizens are to be at liberty to pursue these studies and arts. He is to regulate conduct both on its positive and negative sides, commanding both what is to be done and what refrained from.⁹ That it is possible by disciplinary training under the sanction of law to create almost any desired type of character, and that men, either willingly or unwillingly, can be got to acquiesce in the necessary discipline, is assumed both by Aristotle and Plato as the groundwork of their political theories. It will therefore be apparent that when Aristotle speaks of political science he does not mean the wide subject which we call Sociology. He had a considerable acquaintance—probably greater than that of any man of his time—with the various forms of political life; but when he made his collection of constitutions and advised politicians to study them, it was in order that they might legislate wisely for Hellenic communities and not for the purpose of instructing them in the philosophy of history.

This detracts less than might be supposed from the value of Aristotle's teaching to us. The chapters on courage, temperance, liberality, and the social virtues contain, indeed, little or nothing that would not be very

⁹ Eth. 1. 2. 1094, a 28.

generally accepted as sound advice in civilised European society at this day, but even if the practical conclusions of the Ethics were held not to apply to ourselves, its principles unquestionably do. The instincts, feelings and emotions which determine conduct are pretty much the same all the world over; habits are contracted and character is formed in the same manner everywhere, and those parts of the Ethics in which motives are analysed and the genesis of conduct explained,—by no means the least interesting and important parts, are of universal applicability.

V.

Having ascertained in a general way the nature and limits of the inquiry pursued by Aristotle in the Ethics, it becomes necessary to state the theory itself: What does he mean by good and bad conduct? What are the actions which a wise statesman would encourage or forbid? This forms part of a larger question. Aristotle assumes that every form of human activity,—art, speculation and conduct are each and all pursued for an object which either is or is thought to be good. This good object, or an object immediately resulting from it, is usually treated by the agent as if it were ultimate. If an artist paints a picture, or a mathematician solves a problem or an ordinary person goes out for a walk, the direct object is profit, reputation, health, or as the case may be. But it does not often happen that these direct objects are the final ones. Money, health, and even honour are all desired for something beyond them, and in the last resort for the sake of happiness. Happiness is the name which men give, or would give if they thought about it, to the final goal of all their endeavours. All conscious deliberate action is undertaken for its sake. Happiness is the word expressing the highest good realisable by conduct and by

every other form of human activity. On that point Aristotle assumed universal agreement. But as he points out, men are by no means at one on what they mean by happiness, if we may infer what they think from what they do. There are many who spend their whole life on objects which are obviously proximate, on the immediate gratification of their senses, on accumulating money or seeking honour. It cannot be denied that honour is a worthy end; but at the best, and when it is evidence of the appreciation of good work by those whose opinion is worth having, it is the gift of others, and those who give may take away. This chameleonlike quality is inconsistent with the notion of happiness, which always includes the element of stability or permanence. And yet what is said and thought on such a subject by a great number of people must not be too summarily dismissed; they may chance to be right, and it is to be remembered that in speculations on human affairs there is no such thing as certainty; all we can do is to accumulate probable evidence from as many quarters as possible. Now the sciences of life, biology—especially comparative biology—and psychology are sources from which information on this head can be derived. “It is the province of the physicist to speculate on life and mind, thought being closely implicated with our bodily structure.”¹⁰ To biology and psychology, therefore, Aristotle turns for light on the question wherein true happiness consists. He considers that he cannot do better than take Nature for his guide; she does not always attain the best, but she always tries to do her best, and would succeed were it not that independent disturbing forces intervene. It is a general biological principle that whenever we find the relation of organ and function, or of

¹⁰ De anima i. 1. 403, a 16, 27.

power and action, we must look to the function or action if we would know the value of the organ or power.¹¹ This holds good alike in physiology, in conduct, and in art. Nature makes organs with a view to their functions. In all cases we have to look to the work done or the thing made as an index of the excellence of the instrument, agent or producer. If, therefore, we can assign to man, as man, any definite function or work in life, then, in knowing whether he performs that function well or ill we shall know the end of his being—in other words his happiness or good. But what definite function can be assigned to man? He is a composite being, with many organs and consequently many functions, for it is to be noted that Nature does not care to be economical in her work; she does not attempt to make the same instrument do two things, like the ingenious ironmongers of Delphi.¹² If there is a thing to be done she constructs a separate instrument to do it; one organ one function, one man one vote. On what principle, then, are we to deal with a highly organised animal like man? Are we to consider all his functions as jointly co-operating to a common end, and assign a separate value to each with reference to that end, as judges do at an agricultural show; or are we to find out the characteristic function, and measure him by that one? The latter course is the right one. In ascertaining the end of anything made up of parts, of any "system," whether it be an organic body like an animal or an organism like a state, you must look, Aristotle says,

¹¹ ὅλως ὧν ἐστὶν ἔργον τι καὶ πράξις, ἐν τῷ ἔργῳ δοκεῖ τὰγαθὸν εἶναι καὶ τὸ εὖ. Eth. 1. 7. 1097, b 26.

¹² οὐθὲν γὰρ ἡ φύσις ποιεῖ τοιοῦτον οἶον χαλκοτύποι τὴν Δελφικὴν μάχαιραν πενιχρῶς, ἀλλ' ἐν πρὸς ἐν. Polit. 1. 2. 1252, b 1.

not to the sum of the functions of all the organs or parts, but to the single function of the special and characteristic organ or governing part; that which is special or dominant in a thing being always the end for which it came into being.¹³ Now the special and characteristic faculty of man is his ability to draw inferences by the aid of middle terms; he shares with many other animals the physical powers of sensation and of a certain degree of intelligence,¹⁴ but even the animals which come nearest to him are only capable of drawing immediate inferences; he is capable of ratiocination or of mediate or syllogistic inference.¹⁵ The correctness with which it is possible

¹³ τὸ δ' ἰδίον ἐστὶ τὸ ἐκάστου τῆς γενέσεως τέλος. De gen. animal. 2. 3. 736, b 4. Eth. 9. 8. 1168, b 31.

¹⁴ As to the moral and intellectual position of the lower animals, see Hist. animal. 8. 1. 588, a 16, and following note.

¹⁵ The view, common to Plato, Aristotle, and their contemporaries, and to not a few people at the present day, is that no animal but man can form a general concept; the lower animals cannot, it is thought, combine many experiences of sense into a proposition, formulated either by language or in any other way which includes them. Plato says οὐ γὰρ ἢ γε [ψυχῇ] μή ποτε ἰδοῦσα τὴν ἀλήθειαν εἰς τόδε ἥξει τὸ σχῆμα. δεῖ γὰρ ἄνθρωπον συνιέναι κατ' εἶδος λεγόμενον, ἐκ πολλῶν ἰδὼν αἰσθήσεων εἰς ἓν λογισμῷ συναιρούμενον. Plato, Phædr. 249 B. This opinion rests on two assumptions, neither of which has yet been proved, or indeed is capable of proof; one is that neither generalisation nor ratiocination is possible without language, and the other is that the lower animals have no language. Aristotle, in the course of his studies in natural history, found it necessary to modify the view which elsewhere

to perform this process of mediate inference depends, so Aristotle considered, on the nature of the subject matter of thought. He supposed truth to be a quality of things, something extracted from the raw material supplied by nature, like gold or coal from a mine. Some objects are capable of yielding complete certainty, other objects can supply conclusions only approximately true. In Aristotle's language the former constitute the region of necessary matter and are the subject of investigation to the theorising mind; the latter are the sphere of contingent matter, the region of things which sometimes go one way and sometimes another and are never long in one stay. Matter of this kind—the realm of probability, was thought by Aristotle to be apprehended and reasoned upon by a different mental faculty to that engaged upon necessary matter, in conformity with the psychological truth that generically different things are apprehended by generically

he undoubtedly appears to hold, of the incapacity of the lower animals to reason. "There are," he says, "in many even of the other animals traces of the psychical characteristics which are most clearly to be distinguished in the case of man—courage, cowardice, fear, anger and the rest, and in many animals there is what looks like mind and understanding:—for as in man we find art and wisdom and intelligence, so in some animals do we find some other kind of natural power resembling these." *ἔνεστι γὰρ ἐν τοῖς πλείστοις καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ζῴων ἵχνη τῶν περὶ τὴν ψυχὴν τρόπων, ἅπερ ἐπὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἔχει φανερωτέρας τὰς διαφοράς· καὶ γὰρ—ἀνδρία καὶ δειλία, καὶ φόβοι καὶ θάρρη,—καὶ τῆς περὶ τὴν διάνοιαν συνέσεως ἔνειασι ἐν πολλοῖς αὐτῶν ὁμοιότητες. ὥς γὰρ ἐν ἀνθρώπῳ τέχνη καὶ σοφία καὶ σύνεσις, οὕτως ἐνίοις τῶν ζῴων ἐστὶ τις ἑτέρα τοιαύτη φυσικὴ δύναμις.* Hist. animal. 8. 1. 588, a 18; 29.

different faculties.¹⁶ But each kind of inference, both necessary and probable, is special to man, no other animal being able to perform either the one or the other. Man's work, therefore, or special characteristic function, is twofold. One branch consists in the exercise of theorising mind, and the other in the exercise of practical intelligence. Man has, therefore, two ends, goods or forms of happiness, each corresponding to the exercise of his special power of reason on its appropriate subject matter. The application of pure reason to the data of necessary truth produces "complete happiness," a state regarded by Aristotle as exceptional, whilst the exercise of practical intelligence on things immersed in matter and subject to the disturbing and incalculable influence of necessity and chance and to the refractory nature of matter itself, constitutes "happiness for man" regarded as a compound being obliged to work in the sphere of probability. This lower and purely human happiness is the end of conduct or practical life; perfect happiness is the end of the

¹⁶ Eth. 6. 1. 1139, a 8. *πρὸς γὰρ τὰ τῇ γένει ἕτερα καὶ τῶν τῆς ψυχῆς μορίων ἕτερον τῇ γένει τὸ πρὸς ἐκάτερον πεφυκός, ἔπειρ καθ' ὁμοιότητά τινα καὶ οἰκειότητα ἢ γνῶσις ὑπάρχει αὐτοῖς.*

This general statement is modified when Aristotle in the *De Anima* examines more closely the mode of cognition. We are there told that the mind is not like the thing which impresses it, but that it becomes like it when the impress has been received, as in the case of wax which has been sealed. *De anim.* 2. 5. 418, a 4. *πάσχει μὲν οὖν οὐχ' ὅμοιον ὄν, πεπονθὸς δ' ὁμοίωται καὶ ἔστιν οἷον ἐκεῖνο.* "Like to like" is no more a scientific generalisation than "like to unlike." Whether we say "birds of a feather flock together," or "two of a trade never agree," is partly accident and partly temperament.

theoretic life, an ideal corresponding to what we call the religious life.

VI.

And yet, although in any given society good conduct is that which is praised and bad conduct that which is blamed in that society, and although a man who is careful to adapt himself to the current standard is, so far as moral philosophy has anything to say to him, a good man, it does not follow that all social judgments are equally suited to secure happiness. The subjective standards vary, but there is an objective standard by which they can be measured and rectified, and in defining the conduct which is "best," *i.e.*, adapted to secure the happiness of his citizens, the intelligent legislator must have regard to this standard, which is given by the facts of physical science. If it be true, as Aristotle maintains, that a psychologist must be a physiologist, it is no less true, as he also maintains, that the politician must be a psychologist.

This, however, is not sufficient for practical guidance. It must be shown how we are to act in the concrete cases which arise in daily life so as to secure the results indicated by theory. In laying down rules, it is to be remembered that rigid formulæ are inapplicable to the case of conduct. Probability is the guide of life; to expect a politician to be accurate is as absurd as to tolerate an appeal to our feelings from a chemist, exactness depending in each and every case on the nature of the subject matter. In this difficulty Aristotle has recourse to the experience of the doctor and trainer. The connection between health in the body and health in the mind had been insisted on by Sokrates, and Aristotle as a practical physician was convinced of its

truth. It is common knowledge, he says, that gymnastic exercises to be effectual must be moderate, and the same is true of food; both too much and too little destroy health and strength. So, with regard to navigation: if you are in an unknown channel you should average your risk by steering a middle course. The middle course is not necessarily, it is not often, that which is equidistant from the extremes. It is a middle with reference to the individual agent, his temperament, constitution and circumstances; it is that which in the given case is neither too much nor too little; (¹⁷) in a word it is a relative and not an absolute mean, and hence can never be exactly defined. Practically there are limits of variation in what is called the middle course, and all that can be said is that you must trust to your intelligence to discover and keep within them. The kind of intelligence you must employ for this purpose is prudence, a faculty whose function is to discover the means by which what is expedient for you may be compassed. But, although no rules for prudent conduct can be given, Aristotle is able to supply some hints: (1) resist your personal tendencies; you will know what they are by noticing what you like; (2) of two evils choose the least, remembering that a lesser evil is a relative good; (3) be on your guard against pleasure; she is a very dangerous siren. It will often happen that even with these aids and after giving the best consideration possible you will be in doubt what course you ought to take. In that case, you must seek the advice of an intelligent friend; two heads are better than one, and he

¹⁷ λέγω δὲ τοῦ μὲν πράγματος μέσον τὸ ἴσον ἀπέχον ἀφ' ἑκατέρου τῶν ἄκρων, ὅπερ ἐστὶν ἐν καὶ τὸ αὐτὸ πᾶσιν, πρὸς ἡμᾶς δὲ ὃ μῆτε πλεονάζει μῆτε ἐλλείπει· τοῦτο δ' οὐχ ἐν, οὐδὲ ταῦτόν πᾶσιν. Eth. 2. 6. 1106, a 29.

will at all events be free from the personal bias which must to some extent warp your own judgment.

But the law-giver for whose use these rules are chiefly designed will require his citizens not only to act rightly in the particular case, he will want some security that they will continue to act rightly. Conduct to be adapted to its end must be such as can be relied upon; it must exhibit, not an occasional tendency merely, but a settled tendency to moderation. Such settled tendencies are called habits. Aristotle does not attempt to explain how actions become stereotyped into habits; he states as a fact of experience that they are so; the repetition of actions of a given kind producing a tendency, strong in proportion to its frequency, to the recurrence of actions of the same kind. This tendency when confirmed is called habit. Actions therefore proceed from habit, and when repeated they strengthen it; the habit is the end as well as the source of the action, and is therefore *quâ* end good.¹⁸ The formation of moral character depends on the fact that nature has made the acquisition of habits possible, and therefore, although good conduct is not a natural gift, it is with the assent of nature that it is produced in us. We are so constituted as to be capable of good conduct, and we are perfected therein by habit.

VII.

It has been ascertained that the end of conduct is Happiness, and that good conduct consists in habitually acting under the guidance of a practical faculty called

¹⁸ τέλος δὲ πάσης ἐνεργείας ἐστὶ τὸ κατὰ τὴν ἔξιν. Eth. 3. 7. 1115, b 20.

prudence in a manner roughly described as "aiming at the mean." But what sets the agent in motion and causes him to act at all? Not prudence, for no mental process by itself can cause motion of any kind,¹⁹ and inasmuch as all conduct implies overt acts, that is, a movement of the body or limbs, any rational account of conduct must include an explanation of the phenomenon of animal motion. It is first of all to be noted that the cause of this motion is to be sought in the animal itself, inasmuch as motion impressed from without is not a kind of motion with which the theory of conduct is concerned, being, as regards the body moved, involuntary.

Next, there must be a definite limit (*πέρας*) to self-initiated motion—an object or end to which it is directed. The various powers in man which are assumed capable of causing him to move towards such a limit, object or end, are reduced by Aristotle to two—appetency (desire), and a mental faculty which he calls intuition, a power of apprehending the individual objects presented to consciousness by the senses, qualified as practical, in order to distinguish it from another intuition by which the highest generalisations of science are made known to us. Appetency (or desire) and practical intuition act conjointly, yet so that the actual moving principle is appetency,²⁰ in the absence of which intuition would be incapable of starting motion, its function being

¹⁹ Eth. 6. 2. 1139, a 35. *διάνοια δ' αὐτὴ οὐθὲν κινεῖ.*

²⁰ οὕτως μὲν οὖν ἐπὶ τὸ κινεῖσθαι καὶ πράττειν τὰ ζῷα ὁρμῶσι, τῆς μὲν ἰσχύος αἰτίας τοῦ κινεῖσθαι ὁρέξεως οὔσης, ταύτης δὲ γινομένης ἢ δι' αἰσθήσεως ἢ διὰ φαντασίας καὶ νοήσεως. De motu animal. 7. 701, a 33; κατὰ μὲν οὖν τὸν λόγον τὸν λέγοντα τὴν αἰτίαν τῆς κινήσεως ἵστίην ἢ ὁρῆξιν τὸ μέσον, ὃ κινεῖ κινούμενον. *ibid.* 703, a 4.

advisory merely and not executive. The object to which appetency or desire directs the motions of the body is always something which gives pleasure; it may be wholesome or pernicious, a good or only a fancied good; on that, desire, being irrational, cannot pronounce, it belongs to intuition as an act of intelligence to ascertain the value of the object sought as an end proper to be attained or avoided. When the two partners are agreed, when intelligence approves what desire suggests, we have as the result good moral choice or "truth in correspondence with right desire." By "right desire" Aristotle understands desire listening to the voice of reason, as a son listens (or ought to listen) to his father's advice, and in so far as it does so he considers it a rational faculty, just as in the case supposed we might speak of a sensible son. Man, regarded as the efficient cause of his moral actions, may be reduced to these two principles.²¹

Objectively considered, pleasure-giving objects, by their action through the senses on the desires, may be regarded as the final cause of animal motion towards such objects, and pain-giving objects as the cause of motion away from suchlike objects, and hence the importance of pleasure and pain as factors in conduct; a point strongly insisted upon by Aristotle, who says that to feel pleasure and pain at the right things is a chief determinant in morals.²² The subject of pleasure is very fully dealt with in the Ethics, both from the practical side and also by way of psychological analysis. Here, as bearing on the matter in hand, it is enough to say that the harmonious co-operation of the critical and appetitive

²¹ διὸ ἡ ὀρεκτικὸς νοῦς ἡ προαίρεσις ἡ ὄρεξις διανοητική, καὶ ἡ τοιαύτη ἀρχὴ ἄνθρωπος. Eth. 6. 2. 1139, b 4.

²² Eth. 10. 1. 1172, a 21.

faculties is always attended with pleasure—a feeling which, indeed, accompanies all healthy function and is therefore a powerful incentive to action, both physical and moral.

It happens, however, not infrequently, that appetite and reason do not coincide; the impulse towards some pleasure or apparent good being so strong as to overpower the suggestions of reason. Hence results a state of anarchy or revolt—an anomalous condition discussed at some length in the seventh book of the *Ethics*, and which had given rise to much dialectical subtlety. It seemed so difficult to suppose that in a contest between a higher and a lower part of man's nature the lower part should prevail, that the tail should move the head, that Sokrates for one denied the fact. Aristotle accepted the fact, not unknown in modern experience, and endeavoured to explain it. His explanation will be found in the introduction to the eighth chapter of this book. In practice, however, the exercise of choice is not so simple as, for the sake of describing the process, has been assumed. Rarely only is the end indicated by desire reached directly and by a single path. Most often there are several ways to it and these ways devious, often doubtful and necessitating a good deal of deliberation as to the one which is best to be taken. The faculty employed in thus selecting a means to an end is Prudence. Prudence is essentially the faculty of means and is incapable of pronouncing on ends. Desire selects ends, but neither it nor intuition can devise means. There are thus two executive ingredients in moral choice, desire and intuition, and one advisory ingredient, Prudence. Prudence is defined by Aristotle as "the deliberate and correct selection of means to an end within our power which we ought to desire to attain." What we choose, in this sense, to do, is a better test of character than the acts which give effect to our choice.

The observation of an action gives no certain clue to the character of the agent. What outwardly seems to be courage may really be fear of something else; what seems generosity may be only a form of selfishness; we must know what a man intends to do before we can form a moral judgment on what he does.

It is apparent from what has been said that moral choice is not what we call "Will." It is a deliberate process of selecting out of many things we are able to do some one thing as fitting to be done, but this process does not include the sense of difficulty in exerting the power of self-determination. The exercise of will as usually understood implies a consciousness of something to be overcome, of an obstacle interrupting our free action in a given direction, and this consciousness is different from the consciousness of the difficulty in fixing on an end or in selecting the means of attaining it. There is no word in the *Ethics* or elsewhere in Aristotle which corresponds exactly to "Will" so understood. He did not analyse that particular mode of consciousness. He contents himself with saying that moral choice is voluntary, and with defining "voluntary" as being "a self-initiated movement by an agent who knows the circumstances in which he acts."²³

VIII.

Aristotle's scientific writings have often been criticised for their neglect of the method of verification. That cannot be alleged against his *Ethics*, fully one-third of which

²³ τὸ ἐκούσιον δούξειεν ἂν εἶναι οὗ ἡ ἀρχὴ ἐν αὐτῷ εἰδότη
τὰ καθ' ἕκαστα ἐν οἷς ἡ πρᾶξις. *Eth.* 3. 1. 1111,
a 22.

is given up to testing the definition of good conduct by examining the various kinds of it, in order, as he says, "to strengthen the proof that the virtues are mean states by showing that all of them are so."²⁴ Courage, self-restraint, justice, liberality and other kinds of praiseworthy conduct are accordingly examined and described, and it is made to appear that in all of them the action which is praised is that which avoids the opposed extremes of too much and too little. There is, it must be confessed, some little difficulty in bringing justice within the rule, for although we are blamed for having too little justice, we are never blamed for having too much, and the errors of injustice do not refer to the same subject matter as the just acts which are set over against them, as in the case of courage or liberality. Justice is therefore said to be a kind of mean, or "to have to do with a mean," but not to be one.²⁵ Indeed, the characteristic of justice is shown to be equality and not moderation. In order to explain the application of the notion of equality to the cases where justice endeavours to redress wrongs, Aristotle is obliged to have recourse to the simile of a divided line; when the whole is so divided that one part is made equal to the other part, both the injurer and the injured are said to have their own, and then justice is assumed to be done. But this is the material mean, the mean "of the thing" which Aristotle had before declared to be inapplicable to conduct,²⁶ the middle point of which is always relative to the agent. In this essential respect justice departs

²⁴ Eth. 4. 7. 1127, a 14.

²⁵ ἡ δὲ δικαιοσύνη μεσότης τίς ἐστιν, οὐ τὸν αὐτὸν δὲ τρόπον ταῖς ἄλλαις ἀρεταῖς, ἀλλ' ὅτι μέσου ἐστίν· ἡ δ' ἀδικία τῶν ἁκρῶν. Eth. 5. 5. 1133, b 32.

²⁶ τὸ δὲ πρὸς ἡμᾶς οὐχ' οὕτω ληπτέον. Eth. 2. 6. 1106, a 36.

from the rule to which other virtues of conduct conform.

Friendship is even more difficult to deal with. It is not only a kind of good conduct, but both socially and politically almost the most important kind, and Aristotle shows plainly by the manner and elaboration of his treatment that he so understands it. Yet it cannot be brought within the four corners of the definition of good conduct given in the second book of the *Ethics*. We do not praise our friends for the skill with which they steer a middle course between hating and loving us—a moderate friendship is scarcely worthy of the name, and Aristotle in his picture of the perfect friend has shown conclusively that the avoidance of too much does not in his view enter into the conception of the true relationship. These cases illustrate the difficulty of finding a single formula which will embrace all social relations, a difficulty of which Aristotle was perfectly aware and which he has repeatedly pointed out. On the whole, however, and with regard to the simpler kinds of conduct, the doctrine of the mean gives an intelligible rule and is a sufficient guide.

It is needless to say that this rule does not commend itself to everybody. No convinced Platonist could accept it, and it is repugnant to modern metaphysicians. Kant objects that it makes the difference between Virtue and Vice a matter of quantity instead of being, as it ought to be, a matter of quality. To protect Aristotle against what they consider an injurious imputation, some of his modern commentators deny that he makes the difference between good and bad conduct a question of degree. But his language is precise and definite. Not only does he say in terms that "Good conduct is a mean between the two errors of excess and defect," but he devotes a book and a half to the inductive verification of the statement. The passage relied on to show that Aristotle does

not mean what he says hardly serves the turn. "If we look to the substance and formal cause of good Conduct," he tells us, "it is a mean, but if we look to its final cause it is an extreme."²⁷ He then goes on to mention that not every action can be properly said to be a mean; when an act has once been ascertained to be an extreme the doctrine of the mean no longer applies: you cannot whitewash a vice by saying that it is not as black as it might be, nor can you improve a virtue by saying that it might be better than it is; both the middle and the extremes are points, and cannot therefore have limits of variation.²⁸

This is one of those pieces of logical ingenuity with which Aristotle sometimes amused himself and his hearers; it would no doubt be an excellent subject for discussion after the lecture, "Can you be moderately immoderate or unpunctually punctual?"²⁹—but it is little more than a game of words. Everybody recognises distinctions of more or less in conduct admittedly bad or good. Whatever may be thought of the doctrine of this passage on its merits, it is hard to see how it can be made use of to prove that Aristotle did not consider good conduct a mean state. It is, on the contrary, an emphatic and even exaggerated re-assertion of the doctrine: "An extreme is an extreme and a mean is a mean, and there is an end of it."

²⁷ διὸ κατὰ μὲν τὴν οὐσίαν καὶ τὸν λόγον τὸν τὸ τί ἦν εἶναι λέγοντα μεσότης ἴστί· ἡ ἀρετή, κατὰ δὲ τὸ ἄριστον καὶ τὸ εὖ ἀκρότης. Eth. 2. 6. 1107, a 6.

²⁸ Eth. 2. 6. 1107, a 8—27.

²⁹ It is like the point raised in Eth. 1. 7. 1097, b 16, whether happiness would be more desirable if some other blessing were counted in with it. Scarcely a practical question; what does it matter so long as we are happy?

IX.

Moral conduct is accordingly defined as a habit of acting as we choose to act, the habit being the result of repeated actions of the same kind, the essential character of those actions for each individual agent being that they are neither too much nor too little, leaving it to practical sagacity to determine what is too much and too little. Aristotle thought that a tendency to act in this way could be created as a rule in all men by force of law and custom—the exceptions being a few unhappily defective natures incapable of right training. Whether our actions are determined by us by the exercise of our will, or whether they are determined for us by our organisation and personal history, is a question which Aristotle nowhere formally discusses. So far as moral judgments, including in that term legal punishment, are concerned, he pronounces decidedly for the view that the will is free: man is a voluntary agent if he knows what he is doing and is not subject to external physical restraint; he is free if he can do what in any particular case he desires to do, and he is consequently responsible for the habits which are built up of those successive single acts, or, to speak with more strictness, he is “a contributory cause of his habits,”³⁰ his organisation and inherited disposition being responsible for the rest. He admits that a formed habit may come to be beyond control;³¹ nevertheless, and so far as the judgment of society and of the law is concerned, all acts which are the result of habit must be treated as voluntary, because the single acts composing

³⁰ τῶν ἔξεων συναίτιοί πως αὐτοί ἐσμεν. Eth. 3. 5. 1114, b 22.

³¹ Eth. 3. 5. 1114, b 30.

them are so. But, although Aristotle undoubtedly considered that we are free to do what we desire to do, it is not so clear that he held our desires themselves to be within our power.³² The analysis of animal motion shows desire to be its real efficient cause and desire to be connected with its object by a movement of attraction, a physical propension over which it does not appear that Aristotle supposed that we have any direct control; his solution of the puzzle why we act contrary to our better judgment rests on the assumption of the force of this impulse. Speaking as a physiologist he may well have thought, for anything he has said to the contrary, that we are what our history and organisation have made us, and that our actions are so far determined for us; speaking as a man of the world and a practical politician he treats our actions as determined by us; only on the hypothesis of personal responsibility can either praise, blame or legal punishment be justified.

X.

Aristotle's eminence is so great and many of his scientific *aperçus* are so striking, that it is perhaps natural to try to interpret him in the familiar language of to-day.³³ Thus, his ethical mean becomes "that which enables a person to correspond successfully with his social environment,"³⁴ his moral character "a definite

³² See his carefully balanced opinion as to whether there is or is not "a natural object of desire," a φύσει βουλευτόν. Eth. 3. 4. 1113, a 17.

³³ See G. H. Lewes, "Aristotle," chap. x., for instances of this.

³⁴ Stewart, Notes to the Nicomachean Ethics, i. 194.

form which maintains itself as such ; the mean, so-called, being that course of action which is best fitted in the circumstances to secure its continued maintenance." ³⁵ And it is said that correspondence with environment is the ultimate object of the moral judgment. Such language is, however, misleading, even as an illustration, for it implies on the part of Aristotle a point of view which he had not and, on the facts known to him, could not have reached. That expressions are occasionally to be met with in his writings which point to evolution, which recognise the force of circumstances and even of natural selection as a means of forming fit organs is not denied ; ³⁶ but to hint at a doctrine is one thing, and to establish and adopt it as a working theory is quite another. In another direction the "ideas" of Plato are said "to answer in part to what we now call

³⁵ Stewart, Notes to the Nicomachæan Ethics, i. 195.

³⁶ See a remarkable passage in the Physics where, discussing the question "Why nature does not appear always to act of set purpose and for the best," he observes, "It does not rain that the corn may be spoiled, this is an accident," and then goes on to say *τί κωλύει οὕτω καὶ τὰ μέρη ἔχειν ἐν τῇ φύσει, οἷον τοὺς ὀδόντας ἐξ ἀνάγκης ἀνατεῖλαι τοὺς μὲν ἐμπροσθίους ὀξεῖς, ἐπιτηδεῖους πρὸς τὸ διαίρειν, τοὺς δὲ γομφίους πλατεῖς καὶ χρησίμους πρὸς τὸ λεαίνειν τὴν τροφήν, ἐπεὶ οὐ τοῦτου ἕνεκα γίνεσθαι ἀλλὰ συμπεσεῖν. ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ περὶ τῶν ἄλλων μερῶν, ἐν ὅσοις δοκεῖ ὑπάρχειν τὸ ἕνεκά του. ὅπου μὲν οὖν ἅπαντα συνέβη ὥσπερ καὶ εἰ ἕνεκά του ἐγένετο, ταῦτα μὲν ἐσώθη ἀπὸ τοῦ αὐτομάτου συστάντα ἐπιτηδείως· ὅσα δὲ μὴ οὕτως ἀπώλετο καὶ ἀπόλλυται.* Phy. 2. 8. 198, b 23. This points to natural selection, to the preservation of favourable variations and the destruction of injurious variations, but Aristotle does not adopt the principle.

Laws of Nature." ³⁷ The correspondence, if it can be said to exist, is so partial that readers of Plato would be put on an entirely wrong track by thinking of it. Not only was the kind of uniformity which we call a law of nature undreamed of by Plato, but Aristotle himself had no conception of it. He looked on nature as only one of several agencies, called by him chance, necessity, and man, each of whom had a hand in determining the course of things. In Aristotle's mind Nature had not altogether ceased to be a person contending against mysterious powers, much as the gods are represented in Homer as struggling against the Fates; she appears as a thrifty and well-meaning house-wife whose efforts for the orderly and economical management of her household were liable to be disturbed by the unexpected visits of Chance, by the Necessity of making both ends meet, and by the constant and not always intelligent interference of Man. This is far from what we call "laws of nature."

XI.

When Aristotle describes his treatise as a branch of political science, he means literally what he says; good conduct, as he conceived it, could not be realised, nor could happiness in either of its branches be attained except in a politically organised society. But he is careful to point out, when describing the life of intellectual activity in which alone complete happiness is to be found, that the virtues of conduct must supplement those of pure thought. The philosopher must live in the world, and he will require an adequate supply

³⁷ Stewart, Notes, i. 71.

of those goods which men who are not philosophers value; a life of poverty or of ascetic self-denial, starving and enfeebling the bodily powers and making it impossible for a man to do active work or to take his place in society, is inconsistent with the Aristotelian notion of virtue. Moderately comfortable living must accompany high thinking; life in a monastery cannot under any circumstances be a good life, and if limited to the object of securing future happiness for oneself by the care of the individual soul, Aristotle would have described it with but little qualification as bad.

The Ethics is avowedly a practical treatise for the behoof of practical politicians in what Aristotle calls a constitutionally governed state. Public education, as he conceived it, does not depend on the acquisition of knowledge, but on training in conduct; men must be habituated from their youth up by the power of law and the influence of custom to practise courage, self-control, and regard for the rights and feeling of others. Aristotle's view is marked by the sobriety and knowledge of the world which distinguished him. Where human nature is concerned he was always inclined to compromise, being too profoundly convinced of the impossibility of arriving at anything like certainty, to dogmatise. What every one says on such subjects he considered to be as true as anything of the kind can be; there is a strong *prima facie* probability in favour of the opinion of the instructed minority; where opinions differ there is much to be said on both sides.³⁸

In endeavouring to ascertain the nature of Happiness as a practical question, Aristotle followed the path of physical, not of metaphysical inquiry. It is to biology,

³⁸ Eth. 10. 2 1172, b 36; 7. 1. 1145, b 6; 1. 8. 1098, b 28.

physiology, and the allied science of psychology that he turns for an answer to the question, "What is that function of mind the right performance of which makes us happy?" Plato puts the same question, but answers it differently. He thinks that "The Science of good and evil whose work is to help us"³⁹ is only within the reach of those who have been long disciplined in endeavouring to disengage absolute forms of goodness from their concrete material envelopes, for which purpose the physical sciences are a hindrance and not a help. But both Plato and Aristotle considered that statesmen who understood what they were about would endeavour to shape the lives of their citizens on their own plan. The object of the modern politician in self-governing countries is different. His business is not to theorise, but to keep his party together; to pass such measures as are possible, and to administer affairs in general so as to please the greatest number of voters. As Burke puts it, "To follow, not to lead the public inclination; to give a direction, a form, a technical dress and a specific sanction to the general sense of the community is the true end of legislation."⁴⁰ That is definite and intelligible; whether it is the true answer to Aristotle's question, "What is the aim of politics?" every one must determine for himself.

³⁹ Plato, *Charm.* 174 D.

⁴⁰ Burke's letter to the Sheriffs of Bristol.

CHAPTER I

THE END OF ALL CONDUCT

τί ἐστὶν οὗ λέγομεν τὴν πολιτικὴν ἐφίεσθαι καὶ τί τὸ πάντων
ἀκρότατον τῶν πρακτῶν ἀγαθῶν. Ethics i. 4. 1095,
a 16.

ARISTOTLE begins his formal inquiry into the theory of conduct by asking what is its end.

There must, he says, be some end or final goal of human endeavour. In conduct, as in art, as well as in every speculative inquiry, we are bound to have an object in view. This object may be either proximate or final; in practice we are usually concerned with proximate objects—most men seem exclusively so concerned—but whether we realise it or not, there must be a final end to everything; we cannot always be doing something for the sake of something else. It is of great practical importance, says Aristotle, to know what is our ultimate object in life, for if we place it clearly before us we shall be able better to regulate our subsidiary actions, and, like archers shooting at a mark, hit off that which is right; if we know the end of conduct we shall know the highest good realisable by conduct.

But under which of the various kinds of knowledge or sciences does this inquiry fall? It must obviously fall under that which is most comprehensive, that to which art, conduct, and speculation are all alike subordinate.

There is only one science which fulfils these requirements—the science of politics. Nature made man a social animal, and it is only in social life that his various powers can be realised, and only in the highest form of social life—conceived by Aristotle to be a constitutionally governed city—that they can be completely realised.

Thus, at the beginning of the *Ethics*, Aristotle strikes the keynote of his Philosophy relating to Man by announcing the subordination of all forms of human activity to the political end.

It is to be observed that he always identifies the end of a thing with its good. To know for what purpose a thing came into existence is to know not only a fact about it, but the most important fact—that which determines all else in relation to that thing. If we know that a knife is intended to cut with, we can infer within certain limits its material, its shape and the nature of the processes which caused it to take that shape; if we know the object of a law, we have a guide to its interpretation and also an indication of the state of society in which, and of the character of the men by whom, the law came to be made. The final end of conduct is, therefore, not only the last but the highest step of the actions comprised in conduct—it is the *Summum Bonum* or Sovereign good for Man.

The doctrine of ends is a cardinal point in Aristotle's system, and it must be confessed that he sometimes misapplies it. He asks the question, "What is the last reason of a thing?" not only when he is dealing with things human—with *Ethics* and *Politics*, where the question is important and legitimate, but also in inquiries into natural phenomena, where it is frequently misleading and has often misled him. There are, it is true, cases even in physical science where this question can be properly put and answered. We are fairly certain that eyes are intended to see with, and the knowledge of this their end helps us in following the anatomy of the eyes and is of practical value to opticians. But if we ask what is the final cause of the rainbow or the trade winds, or of the saltiness of the sea or of the elliptical path of the planets, we ask questions which we cannot answer; and to guess at the answer and then to reason from the guess, as Aristotle often does, is obviously

misleading. To this extent Bacon's criticism of the doctrine of Final Causes, that it not only does not advance but corrupts the sciences, is quite just.¹ But when we come to deal with human conduct, the teleological inquiry, as Bacon himself admits, is both legitimate and pertinent. What is the object of a political change or institution? Why do we act in this way rather than in that? These are questions which we can answer wholly or partially from our own consciousness or experience, and, as Aristotle says, the knowledge of the right answer has great influence on life.

As a preliminary to answering the all-important question—What is the final end of Conduct? Aristotle begins, as is usual with him, by stating current opinions on the subject.

Examining the matter from this point of view, he finds that almost every one is agreed on the name; they all call it Happiness. But their agreement is only verbal; each man forms for himself a different conception of what the word Happiness denotes—so at least we must infer from the lives they lead; some men make the accumulation of wealth the end-all and be-all of existence: Aristotle calls this life "contrary to nature;"²

¹ *Causa finalis tantum abest ut prosit, ut etiam scientias corrumpat, nisi in hominis actionibus.* Bacon, *Nov. Org.* ii. 2.

² *βίαιός τις ἐστίν.* *Eth.* 1. 6. 1906, a 6. Michelet (*Eth.* ii. 32) quotes Dante, "*Inferno*," xi. 109–11:

"E perchè l' usuriere altra via tiene,
Per sè natura, e per la sua seguace
Dispregia, poichè in altro pon la spene."

In Dante's view nature and her follower art were both opposed to wealth derived from interest, because man had

others expend all their energies and submit to no little personal inconvenience in the pursuit of pleasure; the hardships and sufferings of politicians for the sake of honour are well known, and form, indeed, one of the most painful chapters in the book of human misery—Aristotle does too little justice to them when he distinguishes the political life from the life of enjoyment;—of the athletic life it is unnecessary to speak; the end is indeed pleasant—the record, the cheers, and the cup, but what men undergo for the sake of it is known only to themselves.³

These proximate ends, wealth, honour, reputation, which are in fact pursued as if they were final, Aristotle examines and rejects as insufficient and superficial; none of them satisfy the tests to which Happiness as the goal of conduct must conform, the tests of permanence and completeness. From popular opinion Aristotle turns to the views of philosophers, and especially to Plato's theory of an absolute objective good by participation in which whatever is called good has the quality of goodness.

Assuming there to be such a thing, which Aristotle greatly doubts, he dismisses the consideration of it as irrelevant to a practical treatise like the *Ethics*.⁴

If the idea of good is the Sovereign good and participa-

been directed to earn his bread by the sweat of his brow, and the unearned increment of money was opposed to this. Aristotle agreed with him, but for a different reason, namely, that money does not naturally beget money—interest is “a breed for barren metal.”

³ τοῖς γὰρ πύκταις τὸ μὲν τέλος ἡδύ, οὗ ἕνεκα, ὁ στίφανος καὶ αἱ τιμαί, τὸ δὲ τύπτεσθαι ἀλγεινόν, εἴπερ σάρκιναι. *Eth.* 3. 9. 1117, b 3.

⁴ εἰ γὰρ καὶ ἔστιν ἐν τι τὸ κοινῇ κατηγορούμενον ἀγαθὸν ἢ χωριστὸν αὐτό τι καθ' αὐτό, δηλοῦν ὥς οὐκ ἂν εἴη πρακτὸν οὐδὲ κτητὸν ἀνθρώπων. *Eth.* 1. 6. 1096, b 33.

tion in it makes men happy, the question still arises, How is it to be got? It may be real happiness in the sense that it is the mysterious cause of real happiness, but it is a reality which eludes one's grasp. A statesman legislating for the good of his citizens would not be at all helped by the knowledge of such a cause as Plato has described in a cloud of metaphor in the sixth book of the Republic.

Dismissing ontology, the true end of conduct for the practical inquirer must be something ultimate, not proximate, and it must also be something which in and by itself realises the aspirations of men and fills their life; there is no end but Happiness which satisfies these conditions. These generalities, however, do not suffice, and we require a nearer and a clearer view of the nature of Happiness.

This view is gained by remembering that in animal life generally and in all the separate parts constituting a living thing there is a function or work to be done in the doing of which the end, good, or happiness of the thing is to be found. Nature never works idly or in vain, she always has a purpose in view; and this purpose discovered, we know the end, good or happiness of the subject of our inquiry. In the case of man, Nature evidently did not create him merely to live a life in common with other animals; she made him for a special work, which can be no other than that which distinguishes him from the rest of the animal creation, namely the exercise of reason—the exercise, and not only the possession of it. If, therefore, the work of man consists in the exercise of a rational function of life, and if we are at liberty to add to this statement the notion of excellence in doing the work, it results that “Happiness for Man” will be found therein. “If,” Aristotle says, “the work of man is a function of life, and if there is no difference in kind between doing a thing and doing it well, then the highest good is an active exercise of the powers of life in their

best and completest form ; and if their exercise be possible in more ways than one, then in the best and most complete way of which they are capable—in a life, moreover, which affords full scope for the exercise of all the powers in question.”⁵ This definition may be put more shortly thus : “Happiness consists in living the best life that your powers command in the best way that your circumstances permit.” To many modern readers this will seem an insufficient description of the end of existence. But it must be remembered here and elsewhere that the sanction of religion which so deeply colours our conceptions of conduct had no place in determining Aristotle’s theory of life and consequently in fixing its end. It is true that he appeals at the close of the *Ethics* to what might be supposed to be the life of the Gods, as corroborating his own views, thinking it probable that their life would not be unlike his own notion of what the very highest life could be, but he did not begin as many moralists now do, ἀπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ. The theology of the day sat very loosely upon him. He dealt with the problem of life, so far as its end is concerned, on its positive and scientific side, constructing his system on the basis of the physical sciences as he understood them. Plato’s *Ethics*, so deeply tinged with mysticism and resting for their ultimate sanction on a psychology involving a belief in future rewards and punishments, seem to many at the present day truer and more satisfying than the cold Aristotelian system. But

⁵ *Eth.* 1. 7. 1098, a 16.

James Harris, the author of “*Hermes*,” gives Aristotle’s definition in these words : “The Sovereign Good is therefore agreeable to our nature, conducive to well-being, accommodated to all times and places, durable, self-derived and indeprivable.”

without attempting to determine which is the truer, it should be remembered that Aristotle's Ethics may well stand sidebyside with Christian morals—to which, indeed, they tend powerful support. For many centuries the authority of Aristotle in the Church stood as high as that of St. Paul. So far as orthodoxy is concerned, most people ought to be content to believe as much as St. Thomas Aquinas believed, and he had no difficulty in accepting Aristotle's view of Happiness.⁶

Aristotle is at some pains to show that his definition of Happiness sums up everything that is said on the subject, at least by those whose opinion is entitled to any weight. He insists that the happy life must be a complete life ; that it must be reasonably furnished with external goods, although there will be necessarily ups and downs in it : a life of severe suffering or of crushing misfortune such as happened to Priam would not satisfy the definition. But if so, where are we to draw the line ? Must we, as Solon advised, wait for the end ? Must our life be completed before we can safely call it happy ? Aristotle examines this thesis and points out several difficulties. If Happi-

⁶ “Toutefois, remarque Saint Thomas, la condition la plus heureuse, même ici-bas, est celle du sage qui se voue à l'étude de la vérité.—Saint Thomas se montre ici le disciple fidèle du Stagyrte, et, pas plus que lui, il ne cache son goût décidé pour la contemplation. Cette préférence n'était pas sans exemple en théologie, et pour la justifier, les autorités les plus hautes ne manqueraient pas. Mais, chose remarquable, le témoignage que le saint docteur invoque est celui d'Aristote, comme s'il voulait indiquer les origines philosophiques de sa doctrine, et le lien qui la rattache en morale comme en métaphysique à la tradition péripatéticienne.” Jourdain, “S. Thomas d'Aquin.” i. 350.

ness is an active exercise of our powers, death cannot be the beginning of it. Why should not a man be called happy whilst he is so? Why wait for the end? Even if you do, the difficulty is only adjourned, for you cannot draw a line at death without assuming complete insensibility on the part of the dead to the fortunes of their living children, descendants, and friends. This would be, he says, a very unkind supposition, and one which few would care to make.⁷

Aristotle, therefore, inclines to the opinion that the dead are not wholly unconscious of or indifferent to the fortune of the living who are near and dear to them, but that the impressions produced on them, being feeble and indistinct, are not enough to alter their state and make the happy dead miserable or the miserable dead happy. He here assumes that view of the after-world which is found in the Homeric poems, and which formed part of the orthodox theology of the day, the view that the unseen life was a shadowy and feeble continuation of the life on earth. The "unsubstantial images of the dead,"⁸ fitting like a dream in the twilight of the lower world would be naturally incapable of the feelings which moved them in their vigorous life upon earth.

It is important to bear in mind that Happiness as defined by Aristotle is the end of all forms of human activity, not of conduct merely, but of art and speculation as well; it is the end of that all-embracing political science which was wide enough to cover the whole range of intelligent life.

⁷ τὰς δὲ τῶν ἀπογόνων τύχας καὶ τῶν φίλων ἀπάντων τὸ μὲν μηδοτιοῦν συμβάλλεσθαι λίαν ἄφιλον φαίνεται καὶ ταῖς δόξαις ἐναντίον. *Eth.* 1. 11. 1101, a 22.

⁸ βροτῶν εἶδωλα καμώντων. *Odys.* 11. 476.

TEXT

BOOK I.

THE first three chapters of this book are a preface or introduction to the whole work. They show, first, the object of the science of Conduct, and its relation to other practical sciences and especially to Politics; secondly, the degree of certainty which may be expected in an investigation of this kind; and thirdly, the difficulties, arising from age and disposition, which beset the inquirer or student.

It has already been mentioned that Aristotle considered human activity in general to fall under three heads: it is either speculative, productive, or practical; either thought, art, or conduct. In the opening words of the first chapter of the *Ethics* he points out that these three varieties of action must one and all be directed to an end.

CHAPTER 1.—“All art, every rational inquiry, everything that we do, as well as everything which we deliberately choose to do, aims at some good; consequently that which is the object of universal effort may well be called ‘the Good.’”⁹ Ends, however, differ; sometimes the action itself, without more, constitutes the end; sometimes there

⁹ πᾶσα τέχνη καὶ πᾶσα μέθοδος, ὁμοίως δὲ πράξις τε καὶ προαίρεσις, ἀγαθοῦ τινὸς ἐφίεσθαι δοκεῖ· διὸ καλῶς ἀπεφάναντο τὰγαθόν, οὗ πάντ' ἐφίεται. 1094, a 1.

is something beyond, which has to be accomplished by the action, which is the thing sought, or ulterior object: we pursue the art of medicine for the sake of health, the art of war for the sake of victory, and there are other arts which issue in a definite external product, such as a ship or a house. Wherever an ulterior object is sought, that object is more final and consequently better than the actions which produce it. So too when, as often happens, there are a variety of acts all subsidiary to a governing object, that object is more final and therefore better than anything which subserves it.¹⁰

CHAPTER 2.—If, therefore, it can be shown that there is an end of all the things we do which is desired for its own self, all other things being ancillary to it, this will clearly be the Sovereign good. Some such final object of our endeavours there must be; we cannot always be doing something for the sake of something else; there must be an end of ends, or our desires would never be satisfied.¹¹ To know this is important, as it will greatly influence our life; we shall be more likely to hit off the right thing if, like archers, we have a mark at which to shoot.¹² Now the science under which the final end of human action falls is political science, the most comprehensive of all sciences, its function being to determine in the case of any political community what kinds of

¹⁰ ἐν ἀπάσαις δὲ [πράξεσιν] τὰ τῶν ἀρχιτεκτονικῶν τέλη πάντων ἰστὶν αἰρετώτερα τῶν ὑπ' αὐτά. 1094, a 14.

¹¹ εἰ δὴ τι τέλος ἰστὶ τῶν πρακτῶν ὃ δι' αὐτὸ βουλόμεθα, τᾶλλα δὲ διὰ τοῦτο, καὶ μὴ πάντα δι' ἕτερον αἰρούμεθα (πρόεισι γὰρ οὕτω γ' εἰς ἄπειρον ὥστ' εἶναι κενὴν καὶ ματαίαν τὴν ὁρεξιν), δῆλον ὥς τοῦτ' ἂν εἴη τάγαθόν καὶ τὸ ἄριστον. 1094, a 18.

¹² καθάπερ τοξόται σκοπὸν ἔχοντες μᾶλλον ἢ τυγχάνοιμεν τοῦ δέοντος. 1904, a 23.

knowledge may be pursued, and by whom and how far they may be pursued. Moreover, the most valued of the arts—military, economic, and rhetorical—are merely ministers to politics, which also regulates conduct by law;¹³ the end of political science is therefore identical with “the good for man.” For even assuming this good to be the same for a political community and for the separate members of it, it is higher and more final in the case of a community; it is all very well to be able to attain individual good, but it is far better to secure what is good for a nation or a state. Our process of inquiry—therefore, although it aims at the good of the individual, is but a branch of the science of politics which looks to the good of all.”¹⁴

CHAPTER 3.—Having briefly indicated the scope of Ethics, Aristotle proceeds to show its inherent difficulties. They arise from the nature of its subject matter. The finish (*ἀκρίβεια*) which can be obtained by working in sandstone, marble, or wood, the quality of sound produced by the voice or by instruments of wood or brass, is quite different; so, too, “the conception of what is honourable and just varies in different societies, and to such an extent that it seems to be merely conventional.”¹⁵ Without

¹³ *ἔτι δὲ νομοθετοῦσης τί δεῖ πράττειν καὶ τίνων ἀπέχεσθαι.* 1094, b 4. Conformity to the rule of conduct fixed in a political community by law and custom is “complete goodness.” See Eth. 5. 1. 1129, b 25.

¹⁴ *ἀγαπητὸν μὲν γὰρ καὶ ἐνὶ μόνῳ, κάλλιον δὲ καὶ δειότερον ἔθνεϊ καὶ πόλεσιν. ἡ μὲν οὖν μέθοδος τούτων ἐφίεται, πολιτικὴ τις οὕσα.* 1094, b 9.

¹⁵ *τὰ δὲ καλὰ καὶ τὰ δίκαια, περὶ ὧν ἡ πολιτικὴ σκοπεῖται, πολλὴν ἔχει διαφορὰν καὶ πλάνην, ὥστε δοκεῖν νόμῳ μόνον εἶναι, φύσει δὲ μή.* 1904, b 14.

discussing whether it is so or not, Aristotle says that the doubts and difficulties on this subject are such that the exact truth can never be arrived at. The propositions with which the theory of conduct has to deal are expressed in terms of probability only, and therefore the conclusions can never be more than probable,—with this we must be content.¹⁶ “Educated people will not require more, for they know that precision in any kind of inquiry depends on the nature of that inquiry, and they will as little think of demanding demonstration from a public speaker as of allowing a mathematician to deal in plausibilities.”¹⁷

“The learner has to contend with other difficulties besides those arising out of the subject matter of morals. If he is young he will have no experience of the facts of life which furnish the groundwork of the subject, and in any case the passions and feelings incident to youth will unfit him from profiting by what he hears, and it is conduct and not knowledge that the philosophy of conduct seeks to produce. So much by way of preface.”

The foregoing remarks warn the reader not to expect any absolute truth or peremptory canon on such a subject as morals. As a branch of political science, it is subject to all the qualifications, doubts, and difficulties which beset investigations into human nature and human affairs. He

¹⁶ ἀγαπητὸν οὖν περὶ τοιούτων καὶ ἐκ τοιούτων λέγοντας παχυλῶς καὶ τύπῃ τάληθες ἐνδείκνυσθαι, καὶ περὶ τῶν ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ καὶ ἐκ τοιούτων λέγοντας τοιαῦτα καὶ συμπεραίνεισθαι. 1094, b 19.

¹⁷ παραπλήσιον γὰρ φαίνεται μαθηματικοῦ τε πιθανολογοῦντος ἀποδέχεσθαι καὶ ῥητορικὸν ἀποδείξεις ἀπαιτεῖν. 1094, b 25.

will not find any standard except a variable one to guide him; no essential forms of goodness such as Plato imagined, nor any moral sense universally present on which to rely: the analogies and modes of reasoning applicable to the case are supplied by such arts as medicine, gymnastic training, or navigation—all essentially relative, whose precepts vary in different circumstances. Approximations to the truth such as these arts supply will be valuable in practice, though they may not satisfy the requirements of exact science.

CHAPTER 4.—“To resume the question of the highest good. What is the end of political science; in other words, what is the highest good realisable by conduct? ¹⁸

“As to the name, most people, gentle and simple, are agreed; they call it Happiness, meaning thereby living well and being prosperous, but there is much difference in the meaning they attach to those words; some thinking of such obvious things as pleasure, wealth and honour, and others of other matters, and often the same man will change his mind, when he is ill, thinking health to be happiness, and when he is poor, riches. Conscious of their ignorance, men look up with wonder and admiration to those who describe what is beyond their reach. ‘And some have thought that beyond the many goods which we all recognise, there is an absolute good which causes them all to be good.’ ¹⁹

“Of these opinions, we will examine those only which are most in vogue or seem to be supported by some

¹⁸ τί ἐστὶν οὗ λέγομεν τὴν πολιτικὴν ἐφίεσθαι καὶ τί τὸ πάντων ἀκρότατον τῶν πρακτῶν ἀγαθῶν; 1095, a 15.

¹⁹ ἔνιοι δ' ᾤοντο παρὰ τὰ πολλὰ ταῦτα ἀγαθὰ ἄλλο τι καθ' αὐτὸ εἶναι, ὃ καὶ τοῦτοις πᾶσιν αἰτιὸν ἐστὶ τοῦ εἶναι ἀγαθὰ. 1095, a 26.

good reason. We must proceed from the known to the unknown. But that which can be known is of two kinds, knowable by us and knowable absolutely.²⁰ We of course must begin with what is knowable by us. Now in morals we have to start with the fact that some things are approved or sanctioned, and others are not. This must be presupposed—it is not necessary to inquire why; a well-trained learner will easily grasp the reasons of conduct. Those who will neither accept the fact nor inquire into the reasons should remember Hesiod's lines—

“ ‘The best is he who for himself reflects;
I count him good who follows a good lead;
But he, who knowing not himself, neglects
The counsel of a friend, is bad indeed.’ ”

CHAPTER 5.—“This, however, is a digression. To return to the question of Happiness; if we look, as we fairly may, at the lives men lead, we find that they propose to themselves three main objects of pursuit—pleasure, honour, and intellectual activity, corresponding to three lives which may be classed as the life of pleasure, public life, and the life of contemplative leisure. The first cannot be defended on any rational grounds; all that can be pleaded in its favour is that many powerful and wealthy men prefer it. Honour may be considered the final cause of the life of politicians, who are no doubt practical men with some education, but it is too superficial to be happiness.²¹ For in the first place it depends

²⁰ ἀρκτέον μὲν γὰρ ἀπὸ τῶν γνωρίμων, ταῦτα δὲ διττῶς· τὰ μὲν γὰρ ἡμῖν τὰ δ' ἀπλῶς. 1905, b 2.

²¹ οἱ δὲ χαρίεντες καὶ πρακτικοὶ τιμὴν· τοῦ γὰρ πολιτικοῦ βίου σχεδὸν τοῦτο τέλος. φαίνεται δ' ἐπιπολαιότερον εἶναι τοῦ ζητουμένου. 1095, b 22.

on those who bestow it; then, men seek honour as a proof of goodness—at any rate they like to be honoured by men of sense and in their own circle and for good conduct. This might lead one to suspect that moral excellence was the end of the political life; but even moral excellence appears to be somewhat wanting in finality,²² for a man may possess it and yet sleep or do nothing in life, and no one would maintain such a one to be happy except he were defending a paradox.²³ We will speak hereafter of the speculative life. A life devoted to money-getting is contrary to nature,²⁴ and moreover wealth is sought for what it procures. Honour and pleasure are more truly ends than wealth, for at all events they are sought for their own sakes; but although much argument has been thrown away on them, they do not appear to be real ends.”²⁵

²² φαίνεται δὲ ἀτελεστέρα καὶ αὕτη. 1095, b 31.

²³ εἰ μὴ θέσιν διαφυλάττων. 1906, a 2. Θέσις δὲ ἐστὶν ὑπόληψις παράδοξος τῶν γνωρίμων τινὸς κατὰ φιλοσοφίαν. Topic i. 11. 104, b 19.

²⁴ See p. 49 ante.

²⁵ καίτοι πολλοὶ λόγοι πρὸς αὐτὰ κατα βέβληνται. 1096, a 9. It has been suggested by a writer in the *Classical Review* (vol. iii. p. 196) that this metaphor is taken from the original legal use of καταβάλλειν as a term meaning “to file, deposit among the public records,” and that hence it means “to publish or make known.” If this be the true explanation, the Greeks must have been unusually fond of consulting their records. As a rule, if one wishes to consign a document to oblivion it is a good way to file it in a public office, where only those who are sufficiently interested to find out where it is and will take the trouble to go and look for it have the opportunity of seeing it.

Aristotle's reason for good conduct, being wanting in finality, is not satisfactory. If a man literally "does nothing all through life" he cannot be said to conduct himself in any sense, or indeed to be a human being; but why is the life of a man who divides his time fairly between action and inaction wanting in completeness because he is not always at work? The distinction between having a thing and using it is here only valuable as an argument against idleness.

CHAPTER 6.—As it would have been impossible to discuss the Sovereign good without noticing Plato's ideal theory, Aristotle devotes a chapter to the subject, with an apology for his criticism, which has every appearance of being sincere.²⁶

"The theory of ideas," he urges, "is not applied by Plato to things which are related as prior and posterior, and hence there is no idea of numbers. But things are called good in the categories of existence, quality, and relation. Now as a thing must exist before it can stand in relation to anything else, it follows that if the relation of prior and posterior be excluded, the idea of good cannot be common to a good substance and to any good property of that substance. Then, both actual existence and whatever may be predicated of it may be called good: for example, God and mind exist, and as mere existences are called good; virtue is good as a quality, moderation good as a quantity, expediency is relatively good; we speak of 'a good home' when thinking of

²⁶ καίπερ προσάντους τῆς τοιαύτης ζητήσεως γινομένης διὰ τὸ φίλους ἄνδρας εἰσαγαγεῖν τὰ εἶδη. δόξειε δ' ἂν ἴσως βέλτιον εἶναι καὶ δεῖν ἐπὶ σωτηρίᾳ γε τῆς ἀληθείας καὶ τὰ οἰκεῖα ἀναιρεῖν, ἄλλως τε καὶ φιλοσόφους ὄντας. 1096, a 12.

place²⁷ and so on, but the Platonists thought good to be so absolute a unity as not be capable of being looked at from more than one point of view—in other words, as not referable to more than one category. Inasmuch, however, as we do speak of it in all the categories, it cannot be that common property of all, universal and absolutely one, which Plato conceived.²⁸

A third point is, that since things falling under the same notion are dealt with by the same science, if good is “one” as asserted, there would be one science applicable to all good things, whereas we find many distinct sciences even of things falling under the same category; take the category of time, for example—the proper time in war is regulated by the science of strategy, the proper time in disease by that of medicine.

Then, it is not clear what is meant by “the real thing.” It is admitted that the definition of the real man is the same as that of man,—*quâ* man there is no difference; but if so, how is there a difference *quâ* good? If it be said that the real man lasts for ever, that does not make him more “good; white which lasts for a long time is not whiter than white which lasts for a day.”²⁹ Aristotle remarks, by the way, that the Pythagoreans carry more conviction when they place the One in their list of good things,³⁰

²⁷ καὶ ἐν τόπῳ δίαίτα. 1096, a 27.

²⁸ δῆλον ὡς οὐκ ἂν εἴη κοινόν τι καθόλου καὶ ἐν· οὐ γὰρ ἂν' ἐλέγετ' ἐν πάσαις ταῖς κατηγορίαις, ἀλλ' ἐν μιᾷ μόνῃ. 1096, a 27.

²⁹ A good debating point; snow which has been lying for a week is not whiter than snow which has just fallen.

³⁰ The Pythagoreans arranged things good and bad by placing them in pairs, one against the other. In the row of good things Unity stood opposite to Number, whilst Good was placed opposite to Bad.

and that Speusippus ³¹ appears to agree with them.

“ Dismissing this point, Plato’s arguments seem questionable because his language does not apply to every kind of good: he puts things ‘good in and for themselves’ in a distinct class, and things productive or preservative of them, or which prevent their contrary, in another class as being good merely on account of the former ³² ‘useful goods.’ Adopting the distinction between goods in themselves and goods useful, let us see if they fall under one Idea. What do we mean by goods in themselves? Do we not mean those things which are sought even where they stand alone, like thinking, seeing, honour and some pleasures, or do we mean nothing but the ideas? If we mean merely the ideas, then the class of essential good will contain nothing. ³³ If, on the other hand, useful things are essential goods, then the definition of ‘the good’ ought to appear whenever we can say that things are useful; but the definition of honour, thought, or pleasure, is not the same, and the same good does not appear in all. ‘The good’ is therefore not a single Idea common to everything. Whence, then, does the term arise; why do we predicate ‘good’ of so many various subjects? It can hardly be one of those cases in which different things get the same name by chance. ³⁴ Is it because they are spoken of with reference to one subject from which they are all derived or to which they all contribute—the ideal theory; or is it not rather because they

³¹ Nephew of Plato, and his successor as head of the school, B.C. 347–339.

³² διὰ ταῦτα λέγεσθαι καὶ τρόπον ἄλλον. 1096, b 12.

³³ ὥστε μάταιον ἔσται τὸ εἶδος. 1096, b 20.

³⁴ ἀλλὰ πῶς δὴ λέγεται; οὐ γὰρ ἔοικε τοῖς γε ἀπὸ τύχης ὁμωνύμοις. Eth. 1. 6. 1096, b 26.

stand to each other in a relation of analogy, as sight is to the body, so is reason to the mind? ³⁵ But the exact treatment of this question and of the subject of Ideas generally belongs to Ontology, and may now be put aside. For present purposes it is enough to say that, even assuming 'the good' to be either a common predicate of things or an absolute something apart from things, it is neither obtainable nor, if obtainable, useful, and we want something which is both.³⁶ It may possibly be said that even if this be true, yet the knowledge of the absolute good helps us to acquire and to practise what is good, for that with the absolute as a pattern before our eyes we shall better know both what is good for us and, knowing this, be more likely to attain it. The facts of practical science, however, make against this argument, for although all those sciences aim at some good and seek to supply any deficiency in it, they one and all neglect to acquaint themselves with the absolute. It is not likely that handicraftsmen would ignore so valuable an aid and, indeed, make no effort to inquire into the subject if it were of practical use. We may well doubt how a weaver or carpenter would be helped in his art by knowing this absolute good, or how a man would become a better doctor for contemplating the 'idea': the doctor does not look at 'health in itself,' or even at health in mankind, but at the health of his patient; his business is to cure individuals."³⁷

³⁵ ἀλλ' ἄρά γε τῷ ἀφ' ἑνὸς εἶναι ἢ πρὸς ἑν ἅπαντα συντελεῖν, ἢ μᾶλλον κατ' ἀναλογίαν; ὡς γὰρ ἐν σώματι ὄψις, ἐν ψυχῇ νοῦς. Eth. 1. 6. 1096, b 27.

³⁶ δῆλον ὡς οὐκ ἂν εἴη πρακτὸν οὐδὲ κτητὸν ἀνθρώπων· νῦν δὲ τοιοῦτόν τι ζητεῖται. Eth. 1. 6. 1096, b 33.

³⁷ φαίνεται μὲν γὰρ οὐδὲ τὴν ὑγίειαν οὕτως ἐπισκοπεῖν ὁ ἱατρός, ἀλλὰ τὴν ἀνθρώπου, μᾶλλον δ' ἴσως τὴν τοῦδε· καθ' ἕκαστον γὰρ ἱατρῆναι. Eth. 1. 6. 1097, a 11. This argument

This chapter is one among others³⁸ in which Aristotle has criticised and dissented from Plato's theory of ideas. In view of the practical objects of the Ethics and of the bearing which the idea of good as an end of action has upon those objects, Aristotle's criticism here appeals much more to ordinary experience than is usual with him when dealing with this subject, although he brings forward other and more recondite reasons for his dissent. Those to whom the "idea" commends itself as an object of belief, and who therefore desire to show that Plato's theory had some other basis than Plato's imagination, see in his "ideas" something corresponding to laws of Nature, or to objects of scientific knowledge, and Aristotle has been blamed for taking Plato literally and criticising him as if he meant what he certainly says.

Aristotle rejected the attempt to solve the problem of universals by a process of reduplication,³⁹ and the arguments in his sixth chapter are some of those he employed against it. Although they may strike modern readers as technical and verbal, they were of a kind usual in the Schools, and such as would be understood and appreciated by Aristotle's hearers. They would not influence, nor were they probably intended to influence, a convinced

has been called unfair and irrelevant. It does not seem to be either, when we remember that Plato claimed for the absolute good that it was requisite in art as well as in speculation; οὐκοῦν καὶ εἰώθαμεν λέγειν ὅτι ὁ δημιουργὸς ἐκατέρου τοῦ σκεύους πρὸς τὴν ιδεάν βλέπων οὕτω ποιεῖ ὁ μὲν τὰς κλίνας, ὁ δὲ τὰς τραπέζας, αἷς ἡμεῖς χρώμεθα, καὶ τὰλλα κατὰ ταῦτά; Plato, *Repub.* 10. 596 B.

³⁸ *Met.* i. 6. 9. 987, a 29; 990, a 33. 12. 4. 1070. b 7.

³⁹ ὥσπερ εἴ τις ἀριθμῆσαι βουλόμενος, ἐλαττόνων μὲν ὄντων οἶοιτο μὴ δυνήσεσθαι, πλείω δὲ ποιήσας ἀριθμοῖν. *Met.* i. 9. 990, b 2.

Platonist, but they might well stiffen the back of a young Peripatetic who was inclined to have an open mind on the subject of Ideas. As to so much of Aristotle's criticism as is founded on the categories, a Platonist would be justified in saying that a philosophy of realities could not be bound because Aristotle had chosen for logical purposes of his own to divide modes of Being into ten classes. The theory impugned was that of Plato himself and not of Speusippus or the School, although it is quite likely that the Academy in Aristotle's time had given greater precision and prominence to the doctrine than its original author.

CHAPTER 7.—“The good of which we are in search is not Plato's ideal, nor is it any general kind of good; it is one thing in medicine, another in strategy, differing in fact in different pursuits, but in every case it is that for the sake of which all else is done; in other words it is ‘the end.’ If, therefore, any single end can be assigned to all our actions, this will be the good of conduct; and if more ends than one can be assigned they will be its good. The highest good must also be more complete than any subsidiary goods. But a thing which is pursued for its own sake is completer than one which is wanted for the sake of something else, and we call a thing complete without any qualification when it is wanted at all times and for itself alone.⁴⁰ More than this, the complete good must be self-sufficient, and by that is not meant sufficient for a man living a solitary life, but sufficient for parents, children, wife, friends and fellow-citizens, for man is naturally a social animal. Of course there must be a limit; a man is not bound to consider every one connected

⁴⁰ Eth. 1. 7. 1097, a 30.

with him or every one who knows his friends; by self-sufficing is meant that which, taken by itself, fills life and makes it worth having. Happiness is that thing; it is complete and self-sufficing and is the final end of everything we do.”⁴¹

“An additional point is that we should choose happiness above all things even if we took no account of anything else; but if we count it in with other goods, the very smallest addition of those other goods would prove its superior desirability, for the addition would make an excess of goods, and of two goods we always choose the greater.”

This will hardly do; what Aristotle says amounts to this: “Put happiness by itself into one scale and all other good things into the other scale, and happiness will outweigh them all”; then he adds—“for if you take the very smallest good out of its own scale and put it in the scale with happiness, there would be a preponderance in the scale of happiness.” Doubtless there would, but as there was that preponderance before, the statement does not advance matters. There is a long discussion on the passage in Rassow. (Forschungen, 112.)

“Assuming it to be conceded that happiness is the highest good, some light may be required to be thrown upon its nature, and this will be done if we consider what is the function of man. For, as in the case of artizans and in fact of all who have work to do, it is in doing that work that their chief excellence is found, so it will be with man, if indeed he has a work in life. But can we suppose a carpenter and a cobbler to have their proper work to do but man not, and that he is born to idleness? Must we not conclude that as the eye and hand and all

⁴¹ τέλειον δὴ τι φαίνεται καὶ αὐταρκές ἡ εὐδαιμονία, τῶν πρακτῶν οὔσα τέλος. Eth. 1. 7. 1097, b 20.

the other members have their work, so the whole man has some work distinct from all these parts. But if so, what is it? Life he shares with plants; we must therefore put aside the vital powers of growth and nourishment; the life of sensation comes next, but this is common to man with all animals; there remains the life of rational conduct—this life has two sides, of which one may be regarded as subservient to reason and the other as possessing and exercising it. Moreover, the life which consists in the exercise of reason may be regarded as either potential or actual; it will therefore be in the actual exercise of reason, this being the highest form of man's activity, that we must look for his work. And if there is no difference in kind between work and good work—the notion of excellence being always added to that of work (as when we say it is the business of a musician to play, and of a good musician to play well), the result will be that 'Good for man is a function of life in that mode in which man's distinctive excellence is manifested, and if such excellence be manifested in more modes than one, then in that mode which is at once the most distinctively excellent and the most complete; in a life, moreover, affording full scope for the exercise of his activities.' " 42

"Let this suffice for an outline; it is better to rough it out to begin with and fill in details afterwards, for if the outline is correct any one can carry the work on by completing the parts, this being only a matter of time. It must nevertheless be borne in mind that, as has been already pointed out, the same degree of finish cannot be attained everywhere,—in each particular case it depends

42 τὸ ἀνθρώπινον ἀγαθὸν ψυχῆς ἐνέργεια γίνεται κατ' ἀρετὴν, εἰ δὲ πλείους αἱ ἀρεταί, κατὰ τὴν ἀρίστην καὶ τελειοτάτην· ἔτι δ' ἐν βίῳ τελείω. Eth. 1. 7. 1098, a 16.

on the material on which you work, limited also by the method proper to be employed; a straight line is not the same thing to a carpenter and a geometrician: one requires what will be useful in his work, and the other seeks to know what a line is, or what its properties are. Nor should we press the inquiry into principles with equal insistence in all cases, for sometimes it is enough to know the fact without knowing the reasons. Speaking of principles, however, observe that some are gained by induction, others are presentations of sense, others result from some kind of habituation and others are derived from other sources. We must endeavour to follow up each principle according to its natural character and take care to define each properly, for the principles from which we start have great influence on the subsequent inquiry. A good beginning is more than half the whole work, and throws much light on what has to be investigated.”⁴³

CHAPTER 8.—“But we must look at happiness not only from the point of view of the principles from which the inquiry begins and of the conclusions reached, but also with reference to what is said about it; if a thing be true everything will harmonise with it, but there is always discord between truth and falsehood.

“A threefold division of goods has been made—external, mental, and bodily; and of these, mental goods rank highest and are most truly ‘goods.’ Happiness has been called a function of rational life; our view coincides with the ancient and universal opinion that it is one. We were right, too, in defining our end as a kind of conduct and an activity, for this refers it to the class of mental, and not to external goods. The opinion that

⁴³ δοκεῖ γὰρ πλεῖον ἢ ἡμῖν τοῦ παντὸς εἶναι ἡ ἀρχή, καὶ πολλὰ συμφανῇ γίνεσθαι δι’ αὐτῆς τῶν ζητούμενων. *Eth.* 1. 7. 1098, b₇.

the happy man must be prosperous and enjoy himself is also in harmony with our definition, for we called happiness a kind of prosperity and enjoyment. It appears that the results of all the inquiries which have been made into the nature of happiness find a place in our description: for some think it to be good conduct, others prudence; some a kind of wisdom, and others again some one of the above with, or at least not without, pleasure; whilst there are still others who, in addition, take in the notion of external well-being. Of these views some are popular and of old standing, and others are held by the eminent few; it is not reasonable to suppose either party to be wholly wrong,—in some one, or even in many points, they are probably right.⁴⁴ Now our definition agrees with that of those who make happiness excellence in general or some kind of it, for 'a function of life according to excellence' is a kind of excellence. But it makes not a little difference whether we conceive happiness to lie in possession or in use, whether we think it to be a state or the function of a state; a man may be in a state—say of sleep or other utter inactivity, and do no good whatever: this is of course impossible if happiness be a function. Just as at the Olympic games not the strongest or handsomest of those present are crowned, but only some of those who enter the lists, so only those who conduct themselves well get what is best worth having in life.⁴⁵ The life of such men is, moreover, in itself pleasurable. Pleasure is a

⁴⁴ τούτων δὲ τὰ μὲν πολλοὶ καὶ παλαιοὶ λέγουσιν, τὰ δὲ ὀλίγοι καὶ ἔνδοξοι ἄνδρες· οὐδετέρους δὲ τούτων εὐλογον διαμαρτάνειν τοῖς ὅλοις, ἀλλ' ἐν γέ τι ἢ καὶ τὰ πλεῖστα κατόρθοῦν. *Eth.* 1. 8. 1098, b 27.

⁴⁵ οὕτω καὶ τῶν ἐν τῷ βίῳ καλῶν κάγαθῶν οἱ πράττοντες ὁρῶς ἐπήβολοι γίνονται. *Eth.* 1. 8. 1099, a 5.

state of consciousness; every man feels a pleasure in what he is said to like: a man fond of horses takes pleasure in horses, and in the same way good actions are pleasurable to a man who likes doing them. To the mass of mankind the objects of pleasure are inconsistent one with another, but that is because what they like is not naturally likeable; to those who like the right thing, *their* pleasure is nature's pleasure and good conduct being a natural pleasure is liked for itself alone.⁴⁶ Pleasure, therefore, is not something hung on to their life; it is an essential part of it.⁴⁷ We may add to this that a man is not really good who does not take pleasure in good actions, and if so, good actions must be in themselves pleasurable. Happiness is therefore at once the best, the noblest, and the most pleasurable of all things, and there is no such distinction as the inscription at Delphi implies.⁴⁸ Still, as we have said, external goods are necessary, for admired actions cannot be done without means; much of our best conduct is done, instrumentally as it were, by friends, wealth, and political influence, and some things there are the want of which clouds our happiness, as, for instance, gentle birth, beauty, and children who turn out well: a man who is hideous or ill-born or childless can hardly be called happy; much less can he be so called if his children turn out badly, or are good and die. Happiness, therefore, requires that things should go well with us, and for this

⁴⁶ τοῖς μὲν οὖν πολλοῖς τὰ ἡδέα μάχεται διὰ τὸ μὴ φύσει τοιαῦτ' εἶναι, τοῖς δὲ φιλοκάλοις ἐστὶν ἡδέα τὰ φύσει ἡδέα· τοιαῦται δ' αἱ κατ' ἀρετὴν πράξεις. Eth. 1. 8. 1099. a 11.

⁴⁷ οὐδὲν δὴ προσδεῖται τῆς ἡδονῆς ὁ βίος αὐτῶν ὥσπερ περι-
άπτου τινός, ἀλλ' ἔχει τὴν ἡδονὴν ἐν ἑαυτοῦ. Eth. 1. 8. 1099, a 15.

⁴⁸ "It is noblest to be just; it is best to be well; it is pleasantest to get what you desire."

reason it is by some identified with prosperity and by others with good conduct."

CHAPTER 9.—"The identification of happiness and good conduct has raised the question whether happiness can be acquired by teaching or by habituation or by any other kind of exercise, or whether it is not something apportioned to us by the Gods or is even a matter of chance.⁴⁹ If there is anything which the Gods give us we might expect happiness to be that thing, and by so much as it is the best of all human goods is this probability increased. This is a question of theology, but even assuming happiness to come to us through good conduct, teaching, or practice, it bears the stamp of a heavenly origin, for the prize and end of good conduct must needs be something which is of the best, nay divine.⁵⁰ It would seem, moreover, to be something largely shared in, for all may attain it who are not unfitted by faulty teaching or practice. And if it is better that happiness should result from good conduct than that it should be a matter

⁴⁹ See Plato, *Menon*. 99 E, where this question is raised nearly in these words as to ἀρετή. Aristotle frequently refers to the *Menon*; in 7. 1. (1145 a 28) he quotes from the immediate context of the passage referred to here. Happiness may be identified with good conduct because, as stated above (1099, a 5), people who conduct themselves well get what is good and honourable in life.

⁵⁰ εἰ μὲν οὖν καὶ ἄλλο τί ἐστι θεῶν δῶρημα ἀνθρώποις, εὐλογον καὶ τὴν εὐδαιμονίαν θεόσδοτον εἶναι, καὶ μάλιστα τῶν ἀνθρωπίνων ὕψω βέλτιστον. ἀλλὰ τοῦτο μὲν ἴσως ἄλλης ἀν εἶη σκέψεως οἰκειότερον, φαίνεται δὲ καὶ εἰ μὴ θεόπεμπτός ἐστιν ἀλλὰ δι' ἀρετὴν καὶ τινα μάθησιν ἢ ἄσκησιν παραγίνεται, τῶν θειοτάτων εἶναι· τὸ γὰρ τῆς ἀρετῆς ἄθλον καὶ τέλος ἄριστον εἶναι φαίνεται καὶ θεῖόν τι καὶ μακάριον. *Eth.* 1. 9. 1099, b 11.

of chance, we may expect that it will so result if, that is, we are right in supposing that what nature ordains tends to the best, just as do the productions of art and of all other causes and notably of the highest cause, for to attribute the greatest and fairest of all goods to chance would be out of harmony with probability.⁵¹ The conclusion here reached clearly appears from our definition of happiness, which was 'that it is a function of life of a particular kind in the way of distinctive excellence.'⁵² As to other goods, it was pointed out that some are necessary constituents of happiness, and others contributory and naturally instrumental as aids to it. And all this agrees with what was said in the opening, for we defined the chief good as the end of political science, of that science which strives above all to make citizens good. It is reasonable, in this view, that we should call none of the lower animals happy, since none of them are capable of a function of this kind.⁵³ For the same reason a child cannot be

⁵¹ εἰ δ' ἐστὶν οὕτω βέλτιον ἢ τὸ διὰ τύχην εὐδαιμονεῖν, εὐλογον ἔχειν οὕτως, εἴπερ τὰ κατὰ φύσιν, ὥς οἶόν τε κάλλιστα ἔχειν, οὕτω πέφυκεν, ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ τὰ κατὰ τέχνην καὶ πᾶσαν αἰτίαν, καὶ μάλιστα τὰ κατὰ τὴν ἀρίστην. τὸ δὲ μέγιστον καὶ κάλλιστον ἐπιτρέφαι τύχῃ λίαν πλημμελὲς ἂν εἴη. *Eth.* 1. 9. 1099, b 20.

⁵² εἴρηται γὰρ ψυχῆς ἐνέργεια κατ' ἀρετὴν ποιὰ τις. *Eth.* 1. 9. 1099, b 26.

⁵³ This is not quite consistent with what Aristotle says in his *History of Animals*, where he tells us that some animals have "traces" of courage, cowardice, fear, confidence, anger, and even of rational qualities. The difference is there stated to be one of degree; he does not, as here, deny them all power whatever of virtuous activity. Of the social capabilities of some animals he was well aware. *Hist. Anim.* viii. 1. 588, a 10-31. See note, p. 26 ante.

happy; for his age prevents him from putting forth the necessary activities. Children who are called happy are so called in anticipation. Full happiness requires both full excellence and a life in which it can be fully developed. Many are the changes and chances of life; the most prosperous man may meet with misfortunes in old age, as in the Trojan story Priam was said to do, but no one would call such a one happy."

CHAPTER 10.—"Must we then refuse to call a man happy so long as he is alive, and, as Solon advised, wait for the end? If so, is a man happy at the moment of his death? This is inadmissible, and especially by those who, like ourselves, define happiness as an activity. But if we mean, as Solon meant, not that a man is happy when he is dead, but that he can then only be safely called so as being out of the range of misfortune, still a difficulty arises; for good and evil may be said to happen in a sense even to the dead in the shape of the successes and misfortunes of their children and issue, just as they do to a man who is alive but insensible. And hence a farther difficulty; for a man who has lived happily, and died as he has lived, may undergo many changes of fortune through his descendants; ⁵⁴ some may be good and get the life they deserve, others may not, and ancestors may stand in every conceivable relation to their issue if we take into account the degrees of remoteness in which the issue stand to their ancestors.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ τῷ γὰρ μακαρίως βεβιωκότι μέχρι γήρως καὶ τελευτήσαντι κατὰ λόγον ἐνδέχεται πολλὰς μεταβολὰς συμβαίνειν περὶ τοὺς ἐκγόνους. Eth. 1. 10. 1100, a 22.

⁵⁵ δῆλον δ' ὅτι καὶ τοῖς ἀποστήμασι πρὸς τοὺς γονεῖς παντοδαπῶς ἔχειν αὐτοὺς ἐνδέχεται. Eth. 1. 10. 1100, a 26.

Now we can scarcely conceive a dead man changing about and being now happy and now miserable; nor can we suppose him never at any time to be touched by the fortunes of his descendants. But to go back to the original question: if we are bound to look to the end and call a man happy when he has run his course,—not because he is then happy but because he has been so,—does it not seem absurd that we may not call him happy when he is, from mere unwillingness to call living people happy because they are subject to the changes and chances of fortune and because we think of happiness as a permanent state? Evidently happiness cannot be dependent on fortune, for if it were, a happy man would be a kind of chameleon and his house would be founded on the sand.⁵⁶ Is it not, then, a mistake to think that happiness follows the changes of fortune? Happiness and misery do not depend on that, although, as we have said, human life cannot altogether dispense with it; what really determines happiness is functional activity exercised in the best way.⁵⁷

The difficulty just disposed of supports our argument, for there is nothing so permanent as the best kind of functional activity; it is more lasting than knowledge itself; we may forget what we know, but we can never forget what we habitually do.⁵⁸ The happy man (who

⁵⁶ δῆλον γὰρ ὡς εἰ συνακολουθοίημεν ταῖς τύχαις, τὸν αὐτὸν εὐδαίμονα καὶ πάλιν ἄθλιον ἐροῦμεν πόλλακις, χαμαιλέοντά τινα τὸν εὐδαίμονα ἀποφαίνοντες καὶ σαθρῶς ἰδρυμένον. Eth. 1. 10. 1100, b 4.

⁵⁷ κύριαί δ' εἰσὶν αἱ κατ' ἀρετὴν ἐνέργειαι τῆς εὐδαιμονίας, αἱ δ' ἐναντίαι τοῦ ἐναντίου. Eth. 1. 10. 1100, b 9.

⁵⁸ περὶ οὐδὲν γὰρ οὕτως ὑπάρχει τῶν ἀνθρωπίνων ἔργων βεβαιότης ὡς περὶ τὰς ἐνεργείας τὰς κατ' ἀρετὴν· μονιμώτεραι γὰρ καὶ τῶν ἐπιστήμων αὗται δοκοῦσιν εἶναι. Eth. 1. 10. 1100,

is also the good man) will therefore have the desired attribute of unchangeableness; he will always, or nearly always, exercise his powers in the best way both in thought and action, and will bear the changes and chances of life with dignity and good taste like the completely fashioned character he is.⁵⁹ The accidents of fortune are many and various in degree; slight variations will not influence his life; great ones, if they make for good, will render him happier, and if for evil, will distress and mar his happy life, for pain and grief hinder a man's power of acting; but even so, his nobility of character will be shown in bearing repeated and great misfortune without repining—not because he does not feel them, but because he is noble and highminded. If, then, right action is what clearly determines the course of our life, no happy man can be miserable, for he will never act wrongly; he will make the best of things, like a good artist, although he can hardly be happy if he meets the misfortunes of a Priam. What, then, is to prevent our calling the man who lives a full life of complete and high activity and who is sufficiently furnished with external goods, happy? Must we add that he is to end his days so because the future is unknown and because we look on happiness as something final and complete? In this case we

b 12. Aristotle does not mean that the good men do outlive the truths they discover, but that habits produce more lasting results than teaching. This is true for the individual, but not for the race: "*le bien que l'on fait aux hommes est toujours passager, les vérités qu'on leur laisse sont éternels.*"

⁵⁹ τὰς τύχας οἷσει κάλλιστα καὶ πάντῃ πάντως ἐμμελῶς ὃ γ' ὡς ἀληθῶς ἀγαθὸς καὶ τετράγωνος ἄνευ ψόγου. Eth. 1. 10. 1100, b 20.

shall have to call the living happy, but happy only if they close their life happily, so far as man can do so."

CHAPTER 11.—"But that the fortunes of friends and relatives should count for nothing at all with the dead is too unkind a supposition, and is moreover contrary to what is generally thought. We need not distinguish the degree and variety of the influences which we may assume to operate; it will be enough to state the general principle. Now, if in the case of the living man the things which happen to him or his friends are sometimes important enough to influence life and sometimes produce only slight effects, and if there is a much greater difference between a thing which moves one's feelings happening in life and after death than there is between horrors being enacted on the stage and being supposed to have happened,⁶⁰ we must take this difference into account; perhaps even more than this—we must take note of the question which has been just discussed as to the extent to which the dead can share the good or ill fortune of the living. It would seem that even assuming anything, good or bad, to reach them, it will be feeble and slight either in itself or relatively to them, and if not, its amount and quality will be such that it cannot make the dead happy who are not so already, or rob the happy of their happiness. The conclusion is that the good and ill fortune of those dear to them contribute something to the state of the dead, yet not so much as to make those happy who are not

⁶⁰ διαφέρει δὲ τῶν παθῶν ἕκαστον περὶ ζῶντας ἢ τελευτήσαντας συμβαίνειν πολὺ μᾶλλον ἢ τὰ παράνομα καὶ δεινὰ προϋπάρχειν ἐν ταῖς τραγωδίαις ἢ πράττεσθαι. Eth. 1. 11. 1101, a 30.

so, or to take away happiness from those who possess it." ⁶¹

CHAPTER 12.—This chapter is rather an anticlimax. Aristotle supports the view of the supremacy of happiness by an appeal to popular language which does not greatly advance the arguments already given. The point relied upon seems to be that the Greek word for honour (*τιμή*), like the English word itself, means generally not only the respect paid to a person, but the person to whom respect is paid, and specifically a magistrate or person in authority. Honour and not praise is the proper tribute to such persons, and as happiness is a governing end (*ἀρχή*), honour and not mere praise is due to it. ⁶²

"Let us consider," says Aristotle, "whether happiness is a good which we praise or a good which we honour, for it is obviously not a mere facultative good. Everything which is praised is so by reason of some quality it possesses or of some relation in which it stands to other things. This is manifest from the language in which we praise the Gods; such language seems absurd when applied to ourselves, because praise is always relative."

⁶¹ συμβάλλεσθαι μὲν οὖν τι φαίνονται τοῖς κεκμηκόσιν αἱ εὐπραξίαι τῶν φίλων, ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ αἱ δυσπραξίαι, τοιαῦτα δὲ καὶ τηλικαῦτα ὥστε μήτε τοὺς εὐδαίμονας μὴ εὐδαίμονας ποιεῖν μήτ' ἄλλο τῶν τοιούτων μηδέν. Eth. 1. 11. 1101, b 5.

⁶² "Your honour" was a common title of English magistrates, as it is now of some judges. "If it please your honour, I am the poor Duke's constable, and my name is Elbow: I do lean upon Justice, sir, and do bring in here before your good honour two notorious benefactors." "Meas. for Meas." ii. 1. 50.

This being so, praise is not applicable to things which are the very best, but some better and stronger term must be used; we call the Gods and men who are godlike 'blessed.' The same rule applies to goods; no one praises happiness as he does justice: he honours it or calls it blessed as being something superior and divine. Eudoxus forcibly advocated the supremacy of pleasure on this very ground; he considered that the fact of its not being praised proved that it was something superior to praise, like God or the highest good. Praise is properly applied to good conduct; we do what is right in order that we may be praised;⁶³ other laudable actions whether of body or mind are the subject of panegyric. Clearly, then, happiness is a thing at once honoured and complete. And this would also seem to follow from its position of supremacy; every one does everything for its sake; and that which rules and is the cause of other goods is properly called honourable and divine."

⁶³ ὁ μὲν γὰρ ἔπαινος τῆς ἀρετῆς· πρακτικοὶ γὰρ τῶν καλῶν ἀπὸ ταύτης. Eth. 1. 12. 1101, b 31.

REMARKS

ARISTOTLE'S language at the beginning of his inquiry into the supreme and all-comprehensive good leads one to expect a specific definition of the highest good attainable by conduct. "If," he says, "there is any end of things done which we desire for its own sake alone, this will evidently be the highest good, and inasmuch as the knowledge of it must exercise great influence on life, we must try to obtain at least a general notion of it."⁶⁴ But the general notion embodied in the definition of happiness in the seventh chapter of this book does not in terms apply to conduct, although the happiness of conduct is implicitly contained in it; it applies exclusively to speculative activity; "if there be more kinds of excellence than one, happiness will consist in the exercise of the best kind," and when he resumes the question of happiness in the tenth book he repeats and enforces this view. "If happiness be an activity manifesting itself in what is good, it is reasonable to suppose that it will manifest itself in what is best. Now whether this be mind or anything else naturally supreme, or whether it be something either essentially or relatively divine, the function of this our highest power in its proper and perfect mode will be complete happiness, and, as has already been said, this function is scientific thought."⁶⁵

It is certainly remarkable that a work avowedly

⁶⁴ Eth. 1. 1. 1094, a 18.

⁶⁵ Eth. 10. 7. 1177, a 12.

dealing with conduct from its practical side and insisting on the advantage of knowing the final end of conduct, should define the end of human action in general in terms which hypothetically exclude conduct itself. The explanation is to be found in Aristotle's teleology as applied to organic life. Whenever anything is made up of parts having distinct offices, whenever there is what he calls "a system" or composite whole with disparate elements or organs, the system is summed up in that part or organ which is special to it; is concentrated therein, so that the special part stands for, or *is*, the whole.⁶⁶ And not only so, but the function of the special part is the end for which the whole system comes into being—it is its final cause or good.⁶⁷ Now of the two forms in which reason is found in man only that which is occupied on necessary matter, only speculative intelligence, is special to mankind in the highest and strictest sense.⁶⁸ Reason dealing with probabilities, and even in that field yoked with irrational feelings and desires, being neither the highest nor the exclusive attribute of man—for traces of this reason are to be found in the lower animals—cannot be his true end or constitute his complete happiness, but is at most only a secondary form of it,⁶⁹

⁶⁶ ὥσπερ δὲ καὶ πόλις τὸ κυριώτατον μάλιστ' εἶναι δοκεῖ καὶ πᾶν ἄλλο σύστημα, οὕτω καὶ ἄνθρωπος. Eth. 9. 8. 1168, b 31. δόξεις δ' ἂν καὶ εἶναι ἕκαστος τοῦτο (sc. νοῦς) εἴπερ τὸ κύριον καὶ ἄμεινον. Eth. 10. 7. 1178, a 2.

⁶⁷ τὸ δ' ἰδίον ἐστὶ τὸ ἐκάστῃ τῆς γενέσεως τέλος. De Gen. Anim. ii. 3. 734, b 4.

⁶⁸ Τὸ γὰρ οἰκεῖον ἕκαστῃ τῇ φύσει κράτιστον καὶ ἡδιστόν ἐστιν ἕκαστῃ καὶ τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ δὴ ὁ κατὰ τὸν νοῦν βίος, εἴπερ τοῦτο μάλιστα ἄνθρωπος. Eth. 10. 7. 1178, a 5.

⁶⁹ δευτέρως δ' ὁ κατὰ τὴν ἄλλην ἀρετὴν [εὐδαιμόνων ὁ βίος]. Eth. 10. 8. 1178, a 9.

and it is therefore excluded from the definition of complete happiness or the true end.

But indirectly, so much happiness as is attainable by good conduct is brought within the definition. Happiness is not life,⁷⁰ it is a mode or form of life; but it is a form which implies all the lower forms, and conduct among them. It may be worth while to point out that the word (*ἀρετή*) commonly translated by "virtue" has in the Ethics and elsewhere in the Aristotelian writings both a general and a special meaning. In the general sense it means excellence of any kind and of any thing; in the special sense it means good conduct. Inattention to this distinction, which is not always clearly marked by the context, often causes misconception. Mr. Herbert Spencer, for instance, criticising Aristotle's doctrines of ends,⁷¹ remarks that he cannot properly be classed with those who make happiness the final end, because he defines happiness in terms of virtue, instead of defining virtue in terms of happiness. But Aristotle defines happiness in terms, not of virtue but of functional excellence.⁷² "It is," he says, "an exercise of the powers of living in their highest form—the notion of excellence being added to that of work." Aristotle had not, at that point of his treatise, defined good conduct, and his definition of happiness does not, as has just been said, expressly refer to it. It is better to avoid the word "virtue" altogether and to translate *ἀρετή* by "excellence" or "perfection" when it is used in the general sense, and by "good conduct" when used in the special sense.

The field in which alone practical intelligence can be developed so as to work at its best is a political com-

⁷⁰ [*ἡ εὐδαιμονία*] *ζωὴ ποιά τις ἐστίν*. Met. viii. 8. 1050, b 1.

⁷¹ Principles of Ethics, vol. i. p. 35.

⁷² See p. 69, ante.

munity, whose excellence Aristotle states to be summed up in its government. But a good government implies a good system of education, teaching each citizen such things as he is fit to learn, so far as he is fit to understand them ; and also, more important than any learning, forming character by the coercive discipline of law.⁷³ Thus habituated a man will conduct himself well, and good conduct will lead to happiness. The fact that a certain measure of external well-being is indispensable, raises the question discussed at length in the tenth and eleventh chapters of this book : "Are we to wait until death before pronouncing a man happy ?" The manner in which Aristotle argues this point is a good example of the dialectic reasoning described in the Topics : he makes use of the popular and accepted belief as to the state of the dead in the afterworld ; he assumes the immortality of the personal soul, and he shows the inconsistencies which would result on those suppositions from drawing the line at death. But the data from which he argues are not such as he himself accepted. He did not believe in the immortality of the personal soul, or in the possibility of the continuance of individual life after death. He conceived soul and body to be related as matter and form are related to the objects around us ; each is necessary to each, the soul supports the body and the body supports the soul, and the non-existence of one involves the non-existence of the other. These are the views put forth in Aristotle's formal treatise on life, implied in another passage of the Ethics,⁷⁴ and doubtless representing his opinion. But they are not suitable premisses for

⁷³ Eth. 10. 9. 1180, a 14-23.

⁷⁴ φοβερώτατον δ' ὁ θάνατος· πέρας γάρ, καὶ οὐδὲν ἔτι τῷ τεθνεώτι δοκεῖ οὔτ' ἀγαθὸν οὔτε κακὸν εἶναι. Eth. 3. 6. 1115, a 26.

a discussion addressed to a general audience such as may be supposed to have listened to his ethical lectures, nor would they have any weight in the scale against Homer and other accredited poets, to say nothing of such a high authority as Solon. Aristotle, therefore, here addresses his public as a rhetorician, and appeals to popular sentiment and belief in order to carry them with him. The teaching of the *Ethics*, as a whole, goes to show that Aristotle found happiness in the world, and that he did not think it necessary to fly for peace elsewhere,⁷⁵ although in its highest form it is given to few to attain it. But he is not careful, in this book at least, to keep the notion of complete and incomplete happiness distinct, and he sometimes speaks of happiness in language which cannot be applicable to both kinds of it.⁷⁶ Usually, however, he means "happiness realisable by conduct," and this he regards as part of the general plan of nature whereby the normal healthy exercise of any faculty causes pleasure; although pleasure is not happiness it is inseparable from it, so much so that in possessing the one you necessarily possess the other.⁷⁷ Aristotle does not expressly say that good conduct is happiness, but he does say that it "commands" happiness; that

⁷⁵ ΘΕΟ. εἰ πάντα, ὦ Σώκρατες, πείθοις ἂ λέγεις, ὥσπερ ἐμέ, πλείων ἂν εἰρήνη καὶ κακὰ ἐλάττω κατ' ἀνθρώπους εἴη. ΣΩ. ἀλλ' οὐτ' ἀπολέσθαι τὰ κακὰ δυνατόν, ὦ Θεόδωρε· ὑπεναντίον γάρ τι τῷ ἀγαθῷ ἀεὶ εἶναι ἀνάγκη—διὸ καὶ πειρᾶσθαι χρὴ ἐνθένδε ἐκεῖσε φεύγειν ὃ τι τάχιστα. Plato, Theæt. 176 A.

⁷⁶ See Eth. 1. 9. 1099, b 18, where he says that happiness as the prize and end of conduct is a common possession—εἴη ἂν καὶ πολὺκοινον,—a statement which does not apply to the perfect form.

⁷⁷ συνεζῆσθαι μὲν γὰρ ταῦτα φαίνεται καὶ χωρισμὸν οὐ δέχεσθαι. Eth. 10. 4. 1175, a 19.

happiness is the prize and end of good conduct, and that those who conduct themselves well get what is worth getting in life.⁷⁸ And he is still more emphatic, as might be expected, with regard to the life of pure thought.

He states, as is usual with him, the various and often inconsistent opinions which were current as to the end of human endeavour. But the only one which he thinks it necessary to examine in any detail is Plato's theory that above and beyond all the things which we call good, is a Good-in-itself, an absolute form of goodness which is the cause of goodness in all cases to which the term is applied. In the Dialogue in which this hypothesis is put forward—for it is put as an hypothesis only, and moreover one as to the truth of which the author was doubtful⁷⁹—it is stated in the form of a simile; as in the world of phenomena the sun is the cause of light and of the beauties which light enables us to perceive, so in the world of thought the Form or Idea of Good is the cause of truth and reason, so that whoever would really know anything or even act with prudence either in private or public life must contemplate this Idea.⁸⁰ Not only intellectual truth but conduct of every kind is said to be conditioned by the power to apprehend this hypothetical entity, the ruler and mistress in the world of forms. Plato's theory of Ideas in which the Idea of good holds

⁷⁸ κύριαι δ' εἰσὶν αἱ κατ' ἀρετὴν ἐνέργειαι τῆς εὐδαιμονίας. Eth. 1. 10. 1100, b 9; τῆς ἀρετῆς ἄθλον καὶ τέλος. Eth. 1. 9. 1099, b 16; τῶν ἐν τῷ βίῳ καλῶν καγαθῶν οἱ πράττοντες ὁρθῶς ἐπήβολοι γίνονται. Eth. 1. 8. 1099, a 5.

⁷⁹ θεὸς δέ που οἶδεν εἰ ἀληθὴς οὖσα τυγχάνει. Plato, Repub. vii. 517 B.

⁸⁰ ἐν τε νοητῷ αὐτὴ κυρία ἀλήθειαν καὶ νοῦν παρασχομένη, καὶ ὅτι δεῖ ταύτην ἰδεῖν τὸν μέλλοντα ἐμφρόνως πράξειν ἢ ἰδίᾳ ἢ δημοσίᾳ. Plato, Repub. vii. 517 C.

the first place, is variously stated in different dialogues, in the *Phædo*, *Phædrus*, *Republic* and elsewhere, and as it rests on no evidence except Plato's imagination, as its author puts a trenchant criticism of it into the mouth of *Parmenides*, and as the theory is not alluded to in some places where it would be natural to refer to it, attempts have been made to show that Plato did not intend it to be taken seriously, and that he meant by it nothing more than that we require a fixed basis for our mental operations—laws of nature or at least scientific data, and that it was for the purpose of showing the necessity for these presuppositions that Plato spoke of sensible particulars as unreal and fluctuating.⁸¹ Aristotle, however, gives a different account of the genesis of the doctrine, which he states to have been framed to support the logical theory of universals and to make essential definition possible; so far from supposing Plato's assertion of the unreality of objects of sense to have been supplementary to the view that the ideas are fixed, he states it to have one of the two chief reasons which led Plato to frame the doctrine itself.

In the first book of the *Metaphysics*, Aristotle tells us, in language perfectly explicit, how Plato was led to construct his theory. "His association with *Cratylus* made him early familiar with the views of *Herakleitus* that all objects of sense were in a state of constant flux, and that consequently no exact knowledge of them was possible."

Adopting this view and also approving the method of *Sokrates*, who was ever in search for definitions and general expressions, Plato was led to conclude that "no universal proposition could be laid down nor any general definition framed of objects of sense, but that it must be of

⁸¹ See Stewart, *Notes to the Nicomachæan Ethics*, vol. i. p. 72 sqq.

'other things,' if at all, that either universal predication or definition was possible. And hence he called these 'other things' ideas, and considered all objects of sense to be distinct from them and caused by them, inasmuch as the individual objects which have the same name or definition as the ideas get their reality by participation in them."⁸² Aristotle not only dissented altogether from this mode of explaining universal predication, but he constructed a theory to take its place. "It is not necessary," he says, "for the purpose of demonstrative proof that there should be "ideas" or "a one *beyond* the many"; all that is necessary is that it should be possible to affirm truly a "one *of* the many." To talk of "ideas" as patterns and to say that other things participate in them, is idle—mere poetic metaphor, says Aristotle.⁸³

⁸² Σωκράτους δὲ περὶ μὲν τὰ ἠθικὰ πραγματευομένου, περὶ δὲ τῆς ὅλης φύσεως οὐθέν, ἐν μέντοι τούτοις τὸ καθόλου ζητοῦντος καὶ περὶ ὀρισμῶν ἐπιστήσαντος πρώτου τὴν διάνοιαν, ἐκείνου ἀποδέξάμενος [Πλάτων] διὰ τὸ τοιοῦτον (i.e., because he accepted the Herakleitean doctrine) ὑπέλαβεν ὡς περὶ ἐτέρων τοῦτο γινόμενον καὶ οὐ τῶν αἰσθητῶν τινός· ἀδύνατον γὰρ εἶναι τὸν κοινὸν ὅρον τῶν αἰσθητῶν τινός, αἰεὶ γε μεταβαλλόντων. οὕτως μὲν τὰ τοιαῦτα τῶν ὄντων ιδέας προσηγόρευσε, τὰ δ' αἰσθητὰ παρὰ ταῦτα καὶ κατὰ ταῦτα λέγεσθαι πάντα· κατὰ μέθεξιν γὰρ εἶναι τὰ πολλὰ τῶν συνωνύμων τοῖς εἶδεσιν. Met. i. 6. 987, b 1.

⁸³ εἶδη μὲν οὖν εἶναι ἢ ἐν τι παρὰ τὰ πολλὰ οὐκ ἀνάγκη, εἰ ἀπόδειξις ἔσται, εἶναι μέντοι ἐν κατὰ πολλῶν ἀληθεὶς εἰπεῖν ἀνάγκη· οὐ γὰρ ἔσται τὸ καθόλου, ἂν μὴ τοῦτο ᾗ· ἰὰν δὲ τὸ καθόλου μὴ ᾗ, τὸ μέσον οὐκ ἔσται, ὥστ' οὐδ' ἀπάδειξις. Anal. post. i. 11. 77, a 5. τὸ δὲ λέγειν παραδειγματα εἶναι (τὰς ιδέας) καὶ μετέχειν αὐτῶν τ' ἄλλα κενολογεῖν ἐστὶ καὶ μεταφορὰς λέγειν ποιητικάς. Met. xii. 5. 1079, b 24.

Cratylus the friend of Plato was a more convinced Herakleitean than Herakleitus himself. He reproved the Master for saying that no one steps twice into the same river, as in his opinion no one steps even once. He ended by carrying his dislike to positive statement so far that he thought it wrong to speak; he used merely to wag his finger. Aristotle describes this as the last word of Herakleitanism—the full blossom of the doctrine. The anecdote comes from the *Metaphysics*, a work which does not ordinarily provide its readers with amusement.⁸⁴

The criticism in the sixth chapter, acute, and from Aristotle's point of view conclusive, is chiefly concerned with showing the logical and other inconsistencies into which the doctrine lands its supporters, although practical reasons are also given against it. Practical reasons are, however, beside the mark; weapons taken from the armoury of sense and experience are powerless against an object so impalpable as the Platonic idea; it is as if you were to attack a cloud with a broadsword. If Plato had desired to answer Aristotle, he would probably have done so in the sense in which Hegel replied to Kant's objection to the doctrine of the absolute. "Do you mean," said Kant, "that there is absolutely no difference between having ten dollars and not having them?" "Philosophy," answered Hegel, "has nothing to do with dollars."

⁸⁴ ἐκ γὰρ ταύτης τῆς ὑπολήψεως ἐξήνηθησεν ἡ ἀκροτάτη δόξα τῶν εἰρημένων, ἡ τῶν φασκόντων ἡρακλειτίζειν καὶ οἷαν Κρατύλος εἶχεν, ὃς τὸ τελευταῖον οὐθὲν ᾤετο δεῖν λέγειν ἀλλὰ τὸν δάκτυλον ἐκίνει μόνον, καὶ Ἡρακλείτῳ ἐπιτίμα εἰπόντι ὅτι δις τῷ αὐτῷ ποταμῷ οὐκ ἔστιν ἐμβῆναι· αὐτὸς γὰρ ᾤετο οὐθ' ἄπαξ. *Met.* iii. 5. 1010, a 10.

CHAPTER II

Book I., Chapter 13—Book II.

THE GENESIS AND NATURE OF MORAL CONDUCT

How use doth breed a habit in a man.

Shak., T. G. of Ver. V. 4. 1.

παντὶ μέσῳ τὸ κράτος θεὸς ὥπασεν.

Æchylus, Eumen. 580.

It is no mean happiness to be seated in the mean.

Shak., M. V. I. 2, 8.

περὶ δὲ τῶν πρὸς ἀρετὴν οὐδέν ἐστιν ὁμολογούμενον· καὶ γὰρ τὴν ἀρετὴν οὐ τὴν αὐτὴν πάντες τιμῶσιν, ὥστ' εὐλόγως διαφέρονται πρὸς τὴν ἄσκησιν αὐτῆς. Arist. Polit. viii. 2. 1337, b 2.

THE end of conduct having been ascertained to be a function of life, manifesting itself in some form (or forms) of excellence, Aristotle now proceeds to inquire what the form or forms in question are. This is a psychological question in the wide meaning given by him to psychology as the science of life and mind. And inasmuch as conduct falls within the competence of statesmanship, the statesman is bound to know something of psychology. He need not be an expert, and it is not necessary that he should be acquainted with Aristotle's own work on the subject, which practical politicians might find it difficult to understand; it will be sufficient for him to know as much as can be gathered from other sources outside that treatise, less accurate perhaps, but enough for the purpose in hand. The well-known division of the vital principle into a rational and an irrational part, is convenient, and is adopted as the basis of the inquiry here.¹ But although

¹ It is not certain to whom this twofold division is due. It is clearly not Aristotle's own, almost as certainly not Plato's, whose threefold division into the rational

the statesman need not know Aristotle's views on psychology, the reader of the *Ethics* should do so for the light they throw on his method and point of view. His psychology was not what is now usually understood by the word; it was not an analysis of the facts of mind based on an examination of consciousness and treated as a subject distinct from physiology; it was the science of life *and* mind, the two being considered inseparable both in thought and fact. The soul (*Psychê*) implies a body, and a body is impossible without a soul; one gives the matter and the other the form. Aristotle refuses, therefore, to dissociate the phenomena of life and mind, pointing out that our feelings and even our thoughts are all accompanied by physical changes;² that they are inseparable from the matter of the body, that even emotions are material reasons,³ and that on this account it is the business of the physiologist to consider psychical questions. Differing from Plato, who ridiculed the notion of learning anything from the lower animals, Aristotle insists on a comparative psychology based on a comparative physiology, of

spirited and appetitive parts was familiar and often referred to by Aristotle; perhaps it was a division adopted by the Academy in Aristotle's time. καὶ οὐ μόνον ἃ τινες λέγουσι διωρίζοντες λογιστικὸν καὶ θυμικὸν καὶ ἐπιθυμητικὸν, οἱ δὲ τὸ λόγον ἔχον καὶ τὸ ἄλογον. *De Anima* iii. 9. 432, a 24.

² ἔοικε δὲ καὶ τὰ τῆς ψυχῆς πάθη πάντα εἶναι μετὰ σώματος. *De Anima* i. 1. 403, a 16. μάλιστα δ' ἔοικεν ἴδιον (τῆς ψυχῆς) τὸ νοεῖν· εἰ δ' ἐστὶ καὶ τοῦτο φαντασία τις ἢ μὴ ἄνευ φαντασίας, οὐδ' ἐνδέχεται ἂν οὐδὲ τοῦτ' ἄνευ σώματος εἶναι. 403, a 7.

³ δηλον ὅτι τὰ πάθη λόγοι ἐνυλοὶ εἰσιν. *De Anima* i. 1. 403, a 25.

which embryology should be a part.⁴ By "Soul" is meant the realisation of all the powers possessed by a living physical organism, without regard to its position in the scale of life. Aristotle has advanced knowledge in so many ways that it is hard to say where we owe him most, but there is no subject in which his originality and scientific acumen are more visible than in the field of comparative biology, none certainly in which he was more immeasurably in advance of his own time. Modern writers, de Blainville, Cuvier, St. Hilaire and others, have spoken in terms of high and probably exaggerated admiration of the extent and accuracy of his anatomical knowledge;⁵ it is at least true that he had examined and dissected more animals than any one in those days, and that he generalised his knowledge with remarkable scientific prescience. His theory of life, in particular, was not only greatly in advance of anything which either his contemporaries or predecessors, with the possible exception of Hippocrates, had imagined, but it is nearer to modern views than anything which had been advanced in Europe until comparatively recent times. He was not, strictly speaking, an evolutionist. He explained the history of life on the earth, not by the metaphor of evolution but by that of motion, regarding it as a continuous and

⁴ νῦν μὲν γὰρ οἱ λέγοντος καὶ ζητοῦντες περὶ ψυχῆς, περὶ τῆς ἀνθρωπίνης μόνης εἰκόασιν ἐπισκοπεῖν. εὐλαβητέον δ' ὅπως μὴ λαυθάνῃ πότερον εἰς ὃ λόγος αὐτῆς ἐστὶ, καθάπερ ζῶου, ἢ καθ' ἕκαστον ἕτερος, οἷον ἵππου, κυνός, ἀνθρώπου, θεοῦ. De Anima i. 1. 402, b 3. τὴν τοιαύτην γὰρ δύναμιν τῆς ψυχῆς ἐν ᾧ πασι τοῖς τρεφομένοις θεΐη τις ἂν καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἐμβρύοις, τὴν αὐτὴν δὲ ταύτην καὶ ἐν τοῖς τελείοις, εὐλογώτερον γὰρ ἢ ἄλλην τινά. Eth. 1. 13. 1102, a 33.

⁵ G. H. Lewis, Aristotle, p. 153.

ascending series, beginning with the least organised plant and ending in man; a series every gradation of which was marked by an increasing complexity of structure. Nature proceeds, in his view, by steps from the inorganic to the organic world, and in the organic world from the less organised to the more highly organised bodies. We find in the lower animals, he says, traces of the moral and intellectual qualities which distinguish man.⁶

As regards man, "the powers of the soul," or, as we should say, the functions of life, are growth, appetite, sensation, motion in place and thought. These five are possessed by man only. Man shares with plants the power of growth, and with all animals the powers of sensation and appetite; the power of motion in space is possessed by him and some other animals in common, that of thought is exclusively his.

In applying this general theory of life to the investigation of the special and distinctive excellence of man, Aristotle adopts in this book the rough division of the functions of soul into rational and irrational which is found in "the exterior or outside discourses" to which he refers; he excludes the powers of nutrition and growth from consideration, as they do not enter directly into conduct,⁷ thus leaving appetency, motion and reason alone to be dealt with. That part of the soul which is

⁶ ἔνεστι γὰρ ἐν τοῖς πλείστοις καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ζῴων ἵχνη τῶν περὶ τὴν ψυχὴν τρόπων, ἅπερ ἐπὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἔχει φανερωτέρας τὰς διαφοράς—καὶ τῆς περὶ τὴν διάνοιαν συνέσεως ἔνειασι ἐν πολλοῖς αὐτῶν ὁμοιότητες. *Hist. Animal.* viii. 1. 588, a 18.

⁷ καὶ τὸ θρεπτικὸν ἐατέον ἐπειδὴ τῆς ἀνθρωπικῆς ἀρετῆς ἄμοιρον πέφυκεν. 1102, b 11.

the seat of appetite or desire is here regarded under two aspects, under one of which it is irrational and under the other rational; it is irrational because appetite or desire is a purely physical feeling, and rational because this physical feeling is capable of being controlled by reason, listens to reason, as a child listens to its father, as is proved by the fact of self-control. The irrational part may therefore be subdivided into the functions of growth and appetite, and the rational part into the functions of reason proper and of that kind of reason which appeals to, and in favourable cases controls, appetite.⁸ This, then Aristotle concludes, is the division applicable to excellence as manifested in conduct, and it gives us a broad distinction between intellectual excellence on the one hand and moral excellence on the other.⁹ They differ, not only in reference to the parts of the mind to which they respectively belong, but also, as a consequence of this, in the manner in which they are produced and developed; intellectual excellence being chiefly due to teaching, and moral excellence almost exclusively due to habit. On what ground is this statement made? Aristotle appeals first of all to language, to the derivation of the word, as showing that frequently acting in a certain way produces a tendency to act again in that way. But he supplements this by arguments of a more formal, and to those who accept his logical and psychological views, of a more conclusive kind. Conduct in general falls under the class or group of things classified by Aristotle as Qualities. Now of Qualities there are four

⁸ εἰ δὲ χρὴ καὶ τοῦτο φάναι λόγον ἔχειν, δίττον ἔσται καὶ τὸ λόγον ἔχον, τὸ μὲν κυρίως καὶ ἐν αὐτῷ, τὸ δ' ὥσπερ τοῦ πατρὸς ἀκουστικόν τι. Eth. 1. 13. 1103, a 1.

⁹ διορίζεται δὲ καὶ ἡ ἀρετὴ κατὰ τὴν διαφορὰν ταύτην. Eth. 1. 13. 1103, a 3.

kinds and no more—all enumerated in the eighth chapter of the *Kategorías*—and Aristotle's proof depends on the completeness of that enumeration. Qualities, the properties of the mind or soul (*Psychê*) by virtue of which our physical and mental peculiarities are produced, are either—

- (1) Habits, or tendencies to do a thing ;
- (2) Capacities for doing a thing ;
- (3) Feelings, passions, and emotions moving us to do a thing,—“those physical states,” says Aristotle, “which are followed by pleasure or pain” ;
- (4) External form or shape.

When we qualify a man by describing his character or appearance, our description falls under some one or all of these heads. Here, where character only is in question, Aristotle omits the fourth head, that of form or shape, as immaterial, and there are left, therefore, three kinds of quality only to be considered, habits, feelings, capacities.

Now good or bad conduct does not fall under the head of feelings, because no one is praised or blamed for having feelings, but only for having them in a certain way ; nor does it consist in having capacities, for the same reason—we are not praised or blamed for being able to act or feel, but for the mode in which we actually do so. But if conduct be neither a feeling nor a capacity, it must be a habit or tendency.¹⁰ There is a distinction between habit and tendency, which is pointed out in the *Kategorías* but which is not always preserved in the *Ethics*, where the two words are often used interchangeably.¹¹ Habit is a confirmed or settled tendency ; a chronic diathesis.

¹⁰ *Eth.* 2. 5. 1106, a 11.

¹¹ See *Eth.* 2. 7. 1107, b 16 ; 2. 8. 1108, b 11 and elsewhere.

Good conduct is therefore a settled tendency to act in a certain way. Now there are three modes in which we might possibly obtain such a tendency — (1) By nature ; (2) By teaching ; (3) By repetition.

The etymology of the word "Ethics" points to the third mode, repetition, and Aristotle provisionally assumes it. But he enforces the presumption from language by showing that it cannot arise either from nature or teaching. It cannot come from nature,¹² for if conduct were a natural settled tendency we could not alter our character, and moral training would be impossible. A stone naturally falls to the ground, and you will not cure it of that tendency however often you throw it up. Moreover, if the tendency to conduct were natural we should possess it in a complete form as soon as we are born, as we possess sight and hearing, whereas the habit of conduct is gradually acquired, and beyond this there is a broad distinction between a natural and an acquired endowment ; in the former case we have a power which we can immediately exercise, in the latter case we acquire the power as the result of exercise. "What we must have learned to do that we learn by doing."¹³ Good conduct, therefore, is not the gift of nature. Still, we owe her something. Nature has at least assented to our being good, in that she has given us an organisation capable of good conduct. In the sixth book of the *Ethics*, Aristotle carries this proposition farther. "Each of the moral virtues," he says, "is naturally in us in a

¹² When Aristotle speaks of "natural virtue," he means only an inherited tendency to conduct, a *διάθεσις εὐθὺς ἐκ γενετῆς*—not a settled state or habit which he distinguishes as *κυρία ἀρετή*. *Eth.* 6. 13. 1144, b 3.

¹³ ἃ γὰρ δεῖ μαθόντας ποιεῖν, ταῦτα ποιοῦντες μανθάνομεν. *Eth.* 2. 1. 1103, a 32.

way." Many people have a predisposition, purely physical, to act rightly. Owing to constitutional peculiarities, self-restraint, courage, liberality, and other forms of good conduct are easier for some men than for others, and there are vices which it would be disagreeable to persons of a certain temperament to indulge in; these "natural habits" may be seen in children and even in the lower animals.¹⁴ There is, therefore, such a thing as a tendency to goodness which must be noted and taken account of in distributing praise and blame, but the part which we ourselves contribute is so much the more important that Aristotle does not hesitate to say in general terms that moral excellence is an acquired habit and not a natural endowment. But although nature is not responsible for our habits, she is responsible for the means by which habits are acquired.¹⁵ We are physically so constituted that doing a thing once makes it easier for us to do it twice; we might have been otherwise constituted, and then it would have been impossible for "use to breed a habit in a man."

As the result of certain physiological conditions action in a well traversed direction is as much easier than action in a new direction as walking on a hard road is easier than cutting your way through a jungle. Aristotle has fully appreciated the importance of the fact that it is with the assent of nature as a co-operating agency that good conduct is possible. Hence the importance of early education, of taking advantage of the fact that our physical structure is so easily modifiable during the period

¹⁴ καὶ γὰρ παισὶ καὶ θηρίοις αἱ φυσικαὶ ὑπάρχουσιν ἕξεις. Eth. 6. 13. 1144, b 8.

¹⁵ οὐδ' ἄρα φύσει οὔτε παρὰ φύσιν ἐγγίνονται αἱ ἀρεταί, ἀλλὰ πεφυκῶσι μὲν ἡμῖν δέξασθαι αὐτὰς τελειουμένοις δὲ διὰ τοῦ ἔθους. Eth. 2. 1. 1103, a 23.

of growth, that early training makes conduct almost automatic in after-life. "It makes no small difference how we have been accustomed to act from our youth up ; it makes a great difference, or I should rather say, the whole."¹⁶

The second possible mode by which good conduct may be attained (*i.e.* teaching) is dismissed without much argument. Ordinary experience, especially medical experience, suffices, so Aristotle thinks, to show that character depends on what you do and not on what you are told to do, although some eminent men had taken the other view. Protagoras used to promise his pupils that if they attended his lectures they would become better day by day.¹⁷ In modern times people listen to sermons or read improving books with the same object. But as Bacon says, "Reading good books of morality is a little flat and dead"; it is exactly as if a patient were to hear what his doctor had to say but were to take none of his medicine and follow none of his advice. "People who doctor themselves in that way," says Aristotle with true professional contempt, "will never get well."¹⁸

There remains, therefore, habituation as the only means of obtaining that chronic tendency to do acts of a certain kind which is the first condition of moral conduct. "It is by doing acts of a given kind and as

¹⁶ οὐ μικρὸν οὖν διαφέρει τὸ οὕτως ἢ οὕτως εὐθὺς ἐκ νέων ἐθίζεσθαι, ἀλλὰ πάμπολυ, μᾶλλον δὲ τὸ πᾶν. *Eth.* 2. 1. 1103, b 23.

¹⁷ Ὡς νεανίσκε, ἔσται τοίνυν σοι, ἐὰν ἐμοὶ συνῆς, ἢ ἂν ἡμέρᾳ ἐμοὶ συγγένῃ, ἀπιέναι οἵκαδε βελτίονι γεγονότι, καὶ ἐν τῇ ὑσταραίᾳ ταῦτὰ ταῦτα, καὶ ἐκάστης ἡμέρας αἰεὶ ἐπὶ τῷ βέλτιον ἐπιδιδόναι. *Plat. Protag.* 318 A.

¹⁸ Ὡςπερ οὖν οὐδ' ἐκεῖνοι εὖ ἔξουσιν τὸ σῶμα οὕτω θεραπευόμενοι, οὐδ' οὗτοι τὴν ψυχὴν οὕτω φιλοσοφοῦντες. *Eth.* 2. 4. 1105, b 16.

a consequence of these acts that we become good or bad as the case may be, just as in the Arts; by playing well you get to be a good player, and by playing badly a bad one.”¹⁹ Statesmen in framing laws proceed on this principle, accustoming their citizens by force of law to do the acts they desire to encourage. All moral education takes this form.

The analogy just referred to between technical and moral action leads, however, to a difficulty. It may be said, it had in fact been said, that if you can perform virtuous acts you must be already virtuous, just as if you can answer a grammatical question correctly you are already a grammarian: if this be so, what becomes of the theory that repeated acts are necessary? Aristotle's first answer is that you cannot assume a man to be an artist because he performs a particular operation in art correctly. A schoolboy may be grammatical by making a shot, or because the next boy prompts him;²⁰ but that hardly entitles him to be called a grammarian. His second answer is that there are wide differences between art and morals, and that you cannot argue from one to the other. In art, you look exclusively to the product and you ignore the motive of the artist; in morals, the act itself is indifferent and the motive of the agent is all important.²¹ If a work of art be

¹⁹ ἔτι ἐκ τῶν αὐτῶν καὶ διὰ τῶν αὐτῶν καὶ γίνεται πᾶσα ἀρετὴ καὶ φθείρεται, ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ τέχνη. Eth. 2. 1. 1103, b 6.

²⁰ ἐνδέχεται γὰρ γραμματικόν τι ποιῆσαι καὶ ἀπὸ τυχῆς καὶ ἄλλου ὑποθεμένου. 1105, a 22.

²¹ τὰ μὲν γὰρ ὑπὸ τῶν τεχνῶν γινόμενα τὸ εὖ ἔχει ἐν αὐτοῖς· ἀρκεῖ οὖν ταῦτά πως ἔχοντα γενέσθαι· τὰ δὲ κατὰ τὰς ἀρετὰς γινόμενα οὐκ ἔαν αὐτά πως ἔχη, δικαίως ἢ σωφρόνως πράττεται, ἀλλ' ἔαν ὁ πράττων πως ἔχων πράττη. Eth. 2. 4. 1105, a 27.

good measured by a purely technical standard, that is enough; why the artist made it, whether to benefit the human race or to fill his own pocket, is immaterial; a picture is not a better picture because it is painted for a Church, nor a worse because the artist intended it as a present to his mistress. In estimating the moral character of the artist these points would have to be taken into account, but not in judging the quality of his work. In the acts which go to build up artistic excellence the important element is knowledge, but knowledge has comparatively little weight in conduct.

One important fact about moral excellence has now been ascertained, namely that it is due to habit; but to what kind of habit? Intellectual excellence is partly due to habit, although teaching is its main source; we acquire the habit of getting up in the morning at a certain hour—are such habits similar to those by which moral conduct is generated? Aristotle, after repeating for the third time the warning that we must not expect scientific accuracy on such a subject as human nature,²² seeks light from the facts of physiology as embodied in the rules of the trainer and the practice of the physician. Both these authorities prescribe moderation, having found by experience that excessive food or exercise tend to destroy both health and strength. This raises a presumption that in the closely allied case of conduct—closely allied because our feelings of anger, fear, joy, hatred and the rest, with which pleasure and pain are always implicated, depend on our bodily state—a middle course will be the right one. Nature has, in fact, so

²² ἐκεῖνο δὲ προδιομολογείσθω, ὅτι πᾶς ὁ περὶ τῶν πρακτῶν λόγος τύπῳ καὶ οὐκ ἀκριβῶς ὀφείλει λέγεσθαι, ὥσπερ καὶ κατ' ἀρχὰς εἶπομεν ὅτι κατὰ τὴν ὕλην οἱ λόγοι ἀπαιτητέοι. Eth. 2. 2. 1103, b 34.

constructed our bodily organs that they do their work to most advantage when neither overtasked nor under-worked; more than that, she has placed them so that they may counterbalance one another and so arrive at the mean. This is a general principle.²³ This is the argument from physiology. Then comes in the analogy of the arts. The art of navigation is in point, for here, as in conduct, you have to deal with a fluctuating subject matter and with conditions which suddenly arise and can never be exactly foreseen. The sailing master reduces his dangers to a minimum by steering a middle course, or what in the circumstances is equivalent thereto; he will take some risk from Scylla for the sake of giving a wide berth to Charybdis. But the doctrine of the mean is true of all art; "Nothing too much" is the golden rule; it is a common test of the excellence of any work of art to say that you can neither add to it nor take from it. By so much as the productions of nature are better and more finished than anything which art can do, in that degree we shall expect the rule of the mean to be more applicable to conduct than even to art. But not only does moderation generate excellence, it increases it; the actions to which the habit gives rise being themselves moderate, tend to increasing moderation in the succeeding actions. Habits are not only produced by actions, they react on them.²⁴

²³ De part. animal. 2. 7. 652, b 16. ἐπεὶ δ' ἅπαντα δεῖται τῆς ἐναντίας ῥοπῆς ἵνα τυγχάνῃ τοῦ μετρίου καὶ τοῦ μέσου—διὰ ταύτην τὴν αἰτίαν πρὸς τὸν τῆς καρδίας τύπον καὶ τὴν ἐν αὐτῇ θερμότητα μεμηχάνηται τὸν ἐγκέφαλον ἢ φύσις, κτέ.

²⁴ ἀλλ' οὐ μόνον αἱ γενέσεις καὶ αὐξήσεις καὶ αἱ φθοραὶ ἐκ τῶν αὐτῶν καὶ ὑπὸ τῶν αὐτῶν γίνονται, ἀλλὰ καὶ αἱ ἐνέργειαι ἐν τοῖς αὐτοῖς ἔσονται. Eth. 2. 2. 1104, a 27.

The actions by the repetition of which good moral habits are generated have thus been shown to be characterised by moderation; they are "middle actions" so far as the varying influences which determine human affairs and individual idiosyncrasies allow a middle to be ascertained; they are in the middle relatively to the particular agent, who in cases of doubt must use his wits and do his best to find his true course: in other words the middle is defined by reason. In general, a man's own reason will tell him where to draw the line. Still, hard cases may arise, and where they do, we must act as we act in all other cases of difficulty—we must seek advice from a prudent friend.

"Good conduct is therefore a habit, the result of repeated actions deliberately performed; those actions must all aim at a mean relative to the agent; the agent must find out where the mean lies by the exercise of his own intelligence, or, in case of doubt, by the opinion of a sensible friend." ²⁵

In the definition just given it will be noted that the acts which form the habit are required to be deliberately chosen (*ἔξις προαιρετική*). Moral choice has not as yet been explained; it will be considered in the next book, and the formal definition in Book II., Chapter 6, is to that extent anticipatory: but that actions should be deliberately intended is a condition which must be satisfied before we can pronounce them either good or bad. Conformably to the practical character of the work, Aristotle has added some plain rules which may help a man to find his own way in case of doubt.

(1) "Of two evils, choose the least. One extreme is

²⁵ ἔστιν ἄρα ἡ ἀρετὴ ἔξις προαιρετική, ἐν μεσότητι οὔσα τῇ πρὸς ἡμᾶς, ὠρισμένη λόγῳ καὶ ᾧ ἂν ὁ φρόνιμος ὀρίσειεν. *Eth.* 2. 6. 1106, b 36.

almost always worse than another." Do as Circe advised Odysseus, keep clear of Charybdis in any case; you may fall into the clutches of Scylla, it is true, and lose some of your crew, but this is better than that ship, captain, and crew together should be swallowed up.²⁶

(2) "Consider in what direction you are most easily led. Men are not all made to a pattern."²⁷ You can easily ascertain your tendencies by noticing what gives you the greatest pleasure. If you go to the opposite direction you will generally be right.

(3) "Above all, be on your guard against pleasure." Pleasure is like Helen of Troy; she is beautiful, but she would be better away.²⁸

²⁶ τῶν γὰρ ἄκρων τὸ μὲν ἐστὶν ἁμαρτωλότερον τὸ δ' ἥττον· ἔπει οὖν τὸ μέσον τυχεῖν ἄκρως χαλεπόν, κατὰ τὸν δεύτερον, φασί, πλοῦν τὰ ἐλάχιστα ληπτέον τῶν κακῶν. Eth. 2. 9. 1109, a 33.

²⁷ σκοπεῖν δὲ δεῖ πρὸς ἃ καὶ αὐτοὶ εὐκαταφοροὶ ἐσμεν· ἄλλοι γὰρ πρὸς ἄλλα πεφύκαμεν. Eth. 2. 9. 1109, b 1.

²⁸ ὅπερ οὖν οἱ δημογέροντες ἔπαθον πρὸς τὴν Ἑλένην τοῦτο δεῖ παθεῖν καὶ ἡμᾶς πρὸς τὴν ἡδονήν, καὶ ἐν πᾶσι τὴν ἐκείνων ἐπιλέγειν φωνήν· οὕτω γὰρ αὐτὴν ἀποπεμπόμενοι ἥττον ἁμαρτησόμεθα. Eth. 2. 9. 1109, b 9.

TEXT

I. 13—III. 5.²⁹

BOOK I. CHAPTER 13.—“Happiness being the manifestation of vital function in its best and completest form, we must consider what that best form is. It is a matter which engages the special attention of the true statesman, whose object always is to make his citizens good and law-abiding; we have an example of how this may be done in the efforts of the Cretan, Lacedemonian, and some other legislators. If the consideration of this question belongs to statesmanship, our whole inquiry will fall into the domain of political science, as was originally suggested. In speaking of excellence, human excellence must be understood to be meant; for the end in view is happiness for Man. Human excellence is excellence, not of the body but of the mind—it will be remembered that happiness was defined as a function of mind,—it follows that the statesman must have some knowledge of psychology, just as the oculist must know general physiology

²⁹ The important section of the *Ethics* dealing with the production and definition of good conduct and the closely allied question of voluntary action extends from Book I., Chap. 13, to Book III., Chap. 6. This portion of the text is given in this and the next chapter.

and anatomy, a subject that engages the attention of all good doctors.³⁰

“But although the statesman must for this reason be a psychologist, it is with the object I have mentioned and only so far as is necessary for that object; for to go into further details would be unnecessary. Some questions of psychology have been treated sufficiently for the purpose in lectures given elsewhere, and what is there said may be here applied, namely that life has two divisions, rational and irrational. Whether these divisions are real, like the parts of the body, or notional, like the distinction of concave and convex in the circumference of a body, matters not for the moment; of the irrational division, one part, namely that which causes nourishment and growth, is common to all forms of life, including plants; to embryonic life as much as to the life of perfect living things, for it is more reasonable to assume this than to suppose that there are different powers. The function of growth may therefore be put aside as having nothing to do with the distinctive excellence of man.³¹ But there is another division of mind (*Psychê*), which, although apparently irrational, still has a certain share of reason, for we speak of reason in relation to self-control and the want of self-control, and we praise the rational part of the mind in the same connection. It seems, however, that there is here an element which is contrary to reason and contends against it; for the desires of those who cannot control themselves lead in contrary directions, like the members

³⁰ δῆλον ὅτι δεῖ τὸν πολιτικὸν εἰδέναι πως τὰ περὶ ψυχῆς, ὥσπερ καὶ τὸν ὀφθαλμοῦς θεραπεύσοντα καὶ πᾶν [τὸ] σῶμα—τῶν δ' ἰατρῶν οἱ χαρίεντες πολλὰ πραγματεύονται περὶ τὴν τοῦ σώματος γνῶσιν. 1102, a 18.

³¹ τὸ θρεπτικὸν ἐατέον, ἐπειδὴ τῆς ἀνθρωπικῆς ἀρετῆς ἄμοιρον πέφυκεν. 1102. b 11.

of a diseased body whose limbs when they endeavour to move to the right are directed to the left. Possibly, then, as in the body so in the mind, we may suppose that there is something which acts against the reason; but even this participates in reason, at all events it does so in the case of the man who controls himself. The irrational part of the mind would appear therefore to be twofold; one part vegetative and having no share of reason, the second part the seat of appetite and desire, and rational so far as it obeys reason. We speak of a man 'having reason of' his father and friends, meaning that he pays attention to them, where 'reason' is used in a very different sense from its mathematical sense which is only 'proportion.'³² Admonition, blame, exhortation, are all based on the assumption that the irrational part of the soul is amenable to the rational, and if we may say that this 'has reason,' then the rational part of the soul will be twofold—rational in the full, essential sense, and rational in the sense of listening to a governor.³³ Now human excellence is defined with reference to this distinction, it is partly intellectual and partly moral; wisdom and prudence are intellectual excellences, liberality and self-restraint moral ones, meaning by excellences, praiseworthy habits."³⁴

³² φαίνεται δὴ καὶ τὸ ἄλογον διττόν. τὸ μὲν γὰρ φυτικὸν οὐδαμῶς κοινωνεῖ λόγου, τὸ δ' ἐπιθυμητικὸν καὶ ὅλως ὀρεκτικὸν μετέχει πως, ἢ κατήκοόν ἐστιν αὐτοῦ καὶ πειθαρχικόν· οὕτω δὴ καὶ τοῦ πατρὸς καὶ τῶν φίλων φάμεν ἔχειν λόγον, καὶ οὐχ ὥσπερ τῶν μαθηματικῶν. 1102, b 28.

³³ εἰ δὲ χρὴ καὶ τοῦτο φαναι λόγον ἔχειν, διττόν ἐσται καὶ τὸ λόγον ἔχον, τὸ μὲν κυρίως καὶ ἐν αὐτῷ, τὸ δ' ὥσπερ τοῦ πατρὸς ἀκουστικόν τι. 1103, a 1.

³⁴ τῶν ἕξεων δὲ τὰς ἐπαινετὰς ἀρετὰς λέγομεν. 1103, a 9.

BOOK II.

CHAPTER 1.—“ Excellence, then, being of two kinds, intellectual and moral, intellectual excellence is produced and increased chiefly by teaching, and therefore requires time and experience; moral excellence comes to us from custom, whence its name ‘customary,’ a slight variation of the word custom. This shows that no moral excellence can be a natural quality, for nothing which exists naturally can be otherwise accustomed; a stone which naturally falls downwards cannot be accustomed to fall upwards, however often you may try to accustom it by throwing it up. Our good qualities, therefore, are not due to nature, but neither are they against nature; we are so constituted as to be able to receive them, and we perfect them for ourselves by use.”³⁵

“ Another reason is that in the case of natural qualities we first get the power and afterwards put forth the activity, as for example in the case of the senses; it is not from repeatedly seeing or hearing that we come to possess those senses, it is just the reverse—we have them first and use them afterwards. But we get our moral qualities in the way we get artistic aptitude,

³⁵ οὐτ’ ἄρα φύσει οὔτε παρὰ φύσιν ἐγγίνονται αἱ ἀρεταί, ἀλλὰ πεφυκόσι μὲν ἡμῖν δέξασθαι αὐτάς, τελειούμενοις δὲ διὰ τοῦ ζῆσους. 1103 a 23.

as the result of previous action; what we must have learned to do, that we learn by doing; ³⁶ as by building we become builders and by harp-playing harpists, so by performing just, temperate and courageous acts we come to be just, brave and temperate. Witness what happens in a State; it is by a process of habituation that legislators seek to make their citizens good; such is the intention of every legislator, and those who fail in it go wrong; the difference between a good and bad constitution is measured by their success or failure in this matter."

"Another reason may be given; namely, that it is by and through the selfsame acts that every excellence, both moral and artistic, is produced and destroyed; it is by playing on the harp that both good and bad harpists are made, and unless this were so instruction would be useless, for everybody would be either good or bad to begin with. This is the rule with good conduct; it is by doing business with our fellow-men that some of us become just and others unjust; by acting in circumstances of fear and danger and being accustomed to be either stout-hearted or timid, that we become, some brave, others cowards; so, too, with regard to our desires and angers,—in a word it is by actions of a given kind that habits of that particular kind are formed: hence the necessity of qualifying our acts, for as our acts differ, our habits will differ."

"It is of no small importance, therefore, how we

³⁶ ὅσα μὲν φύσει ἡμῖν παραγίνεται, τὰς δυνάμεις τούτων πρότερον κομίζομεθα, ὕστερον δὲ τὰς ἐνεργείας ἀποδίδομεν, ὅπερ ἐπὶ τῶν αἰσθήσεων δῆλον· οὐ γὰρ ἐκ τοῦ πολλάκις ἰδεῖν ἢ πολλάκις ἀκοῦσαι τὰς αἰσθήσεις ἐλάβομεν, ἀλλ' ἀνάπαλιν ἔχοντες ἐχρησάμεθα, οὐ χρησάμενοι ἔσχομεν. ἃ γὰρ δεῖ μαθόντας ποιεῖν, ταῦτα ποιοῦντες μανθάνομεν. 1103, a 26-32.

have been accustomed to act from our youth up—it makes a vast difference, nay it makes all the difference.”³⁷

CHAPTER 2.—“The present treatise not being, like so many others, merely speculative—our object is not to know what good conduct is, but to learn to conduct ourselves well—it becomes necessary to consider the nature of actions, and how they are to be performed, since actions, as we have seen, determine the quality of habits. That we should act according to right reason is common ground³⁸ and may be assumed—we will say something presently on the nature of right reason and on its relation to other kinds of excellence—but let us first preface by observing that all statements on matters of conduct must be framed in general, and not in exact terms, in accordance with what was laid down in the beginning of this treatise about demanding reasonings adapted to this subject matter; for questions of conduct and of expediency are like questions of health—they have no fixed point. Such being the nature of ethical inquiries in general, statements as to particular matters of conduct will be still less likely to be precisely true, since they fall under the competence of no art or other set of precepts, but the agents themselves have

³⁷ διὸ δεῖ τὰς ἐνεργείας ποιᾶς ἀποδιδόναι· κατὰ γὰρ τὰς τούτων διαφορὰς ἀκολουθοῦσιν αἱ ἕξεις. οὐ μικρὸν οὖν διαφέρει τὸ οὕτως ἢ οὕτως εὐθὺς ἐκ νέων ἐθίζεσθαι, ἀλλὰ πάμπαν, μᾶλλον δὲ τὸ πᾶν. 1103, b 22.

³⁸ ὑποκείσθω. 1103, b 32; if we read ὑπερκείσθω it will be “is a proposition extending over the whole subject.” It is at any rate clear that by λόγος Aristotle means the rational faculty of prudence, not “a proportion,” or “a system” as sometimes supposed.

from time to time to consider what is proper to be done, just as in medicine or navigation.”³⁹

“Such being the nature of the subject in hand, we must try to come to its aid. And first let it be noted that things resembling conduct are destroyed by too much and too little, health and strength for example, for both excessive and deficient gymnastic exercises are destructive of strength, as too much food and drink are of health, whereas the proper amount of nourishment produces and also increases and preserves it. The same rule applies to self-restraint, courage, and other kinds of good conduct; the man who avoids everything and resists nothing becomes a coward; the man who affronts everything becomes rash; he who enjoys every pleasure without restriction becomes dissolute, and he who, like an ascetic, turns his back on all pleasures, ends by having no sensibility. Self-restraint and courage, then, are destroyed by excess and defect, and are preserved by moderation. But it is not only by the same acts and in the same circumstance that conduct is formed and strengthened; it is in and by those selfsame acts and circumstances that its power is increased.⁴⁰ Take the plain case of physical

39 ἐκεῖνο δὲ προδιομολογείσθω, ὅτι πᾶς ὁ περὶ τῶν πρακτῶν λόγος τύπῳ καὶ οὐκ ἀκριβῶς ὀφείλει λέγεσθαι, ὥσπερ καὶ κατ’ ἀρχὰς εἶπομεν ὅτι κατὰ τὴν ὕλην οἱ λόγοι ἀπαιτητέοι· τὰ δ’ ἐν ταῖς πράξεσι καὶ τὰ συμφέροντα οὐδὲν ἐστηκὸς ἔχει, ὥσπερ οὐδὲ τὰ ὑγιεινά. τοιούτου δ’ ὄντος τοῦ καθόλου λόγον, ἔτι μᾶλλον ὁ περὶ τῶν καθ’ ἕκαστα λόγος οὐκ ἔχει τὰκριβές· οὐτὲ γὰρ ὑπὸ τέχνην οὐθ’ ὑπὸ παραγγελίαν οὐδεμίαν πίπτει, δεῖ δ’ αὐτοὺς ἀεὶ τοὺς πράττοντας τὰ πρὸς τὸν καιρὸν σκοπεῖν, ὥσπερ καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς ἱατρικῆς ἔχει καὶ τῆς κυβερνητικῆς. 1103, b 34.

40 ἀλλ’ οὐ μόνον αἱ γενέσεις καὶ αὐξήσεις καὶ αἱ φθοραὶ ἐκ τῶν αὐτῶν καὶ ὑπὸ τῶν αὐτῶν γίνονται, ἀλλὰ καὶ αἱ ἐνέργειαι ἐν τοῖς αὐτοῖς ἔσονται. 1104, a 27.

strength; it comes from taking full nourishment and hard exercise, and the strong man is he who is most capable of doing both. Just so with good conduct; we become temperate by abstaining from pleasures, and when we have become temperate we are more than ever capable of abstinence, and the same holds good as to courage."

CHAPTER 3.—"We may take as evidence of our habits the pleasure or pain consequent on our actions; the man who abstains from bodily pleasures and derives pleasure from abstaining is self-restrained, he who complains is dissolute; the man who is firm in circumstances of peril and likes it, or at all events does not dislike it, is brave, he who dislikes it is a coward. It is with pleasure and pain that good conduct has to do,⁴¹ for it is pleasure which causes us to do what is wrong and pain which withholds us from doing what is right. For this reason we ought to be brought up from our earliest youth (as Plato says) to feel pleasure and pain at the right objects, for this is true education. Another reason is that conduct is a question of action and feeling; and all action and feeling are followed by pleasure and pain. Punishment points in the same direction, for it is a kind of cure, and cures are usually effected by an allopathic treatment.⁴²

As was said not long ago, the nature of the actions which form habits cause the habits to be bad or good,⁴³

⁴¹ περὶ ἡδονᾶς γὰρ καὶ λύπας ἐστὶν ἡ ἠθικὴ ἀρετή. 1104, b 8.

⁴² μνηύουσι δὲ καὶ αἱ κολάσεις γινόμεναι διὰ τούτων· ἰατρεῖαι γάρ τινές εἰσιν, αἱ δὲ ἰατρεῖαι διὰ τῶν ἐναντίων πεφύκασιν γίνεσθαι. 1104, b 16.

⁴³ πᾶσα ψυχῆς ἕξις, ὅφ' οἷον πέφυκε γίνεσθαι χείρων καὶ

and inasmuch as it is pleasure and pain which make us bad or good, those feelings must have much to do with conduct. It is for this reason that some define good conduct as an insensible or quiescent state, wrongly, because they do not distinguish; they ought to say "quiescent when one ought to be so," "insensible to certain objects," and so on. It may be assumed, then, that good conduct is a such a habit as has been described—a habit of acting with reference to pleasure and pain so as to get the best results, and that bad conduct is the opposite."

"The following consideration also shows our conduct to be determined by pleasure and pain. There are three objects which cause us to pursue or avoid anything—the honourable, the expedient, and the pleasurable, with their opposites: now a good man is right and a bad one is wrong in his choice of all three, but especially of pleasure; pleasure is a motive common to all animals and accompanies every act of choice; for both honour and expediency are pleasant. Further, pleasure grows up with us from our earliest infancy; it is therefore difficult to get rid of a feeling which colours our very life.⁴⁴ We regulate our actions too, some more, some less, by pleasure and pain. We may add that, as Herakleitus says, it is more difficult to contend with pleasure than with anger, and to overcome difficulties is the business both of art and good conduct, for excellence is best shown by doing this. For this reason, in addition to all the others it follows that the whole treatment both of

βελτίων, πρὸς ταῦτα καὶ περὶ ταῦτα τὴν φύσιν ἔχει. 1104, b 19. The reference is to 1104, a 27.

⁴⁴ ἔτι δ' ἐκ νηπίου πᾶσιν ἡμῖν συντέθραπται διὸ χαλεπὸν ἀποτρίψασθαι τοῦτο τὸ πάθος ἐγκεχρωσμένον τῷ βίῳ. 1105, a 2.

Ethics and Politics must be carried on with reference to pleasure and pain."

CHAPTER 4.—"But what is meant by saying that we become just or temperate by doing just and temperate acts? For if we do those acts we are already just and temperate, as a man is grammatical or musical if he plays correctly or speaks grammatically. But is it so even in the Arts? A man may answer a question in grammar by making a guess or because somebody prompts him, but he can only be called grammatical when he gives the right answer from his own knowledge of grammar. In fact, there is no similarity between art and conduct. The excellence of works of art lies in themselves, it is sufficient if they are of a certain quality; but in conduct it is not the quality of the acts but the motive of the agent that is important; ⁴⁵ first, he must act knowingly, next intentionally, and moreover he must intend the acts themselves, the very acts, and thirdly he must act firmly and consistently. Now these conditions, except that of knowledge, do not count in the case of art, and knowledge is the condition which in conduct is least important, whilst the others are of great weight."

"It has therefore been well said that a man becomes just by acting justly, temperate by acting temperately; by not so acting no one will even get in the way of becoming

⁴⁵ ἔτι οὐδ' ὁμοίον ἐστὶν ἐπὶ τε τῶν τεχνῶν καὶ τῶν ἀρετῶν· τὰ μὲν γὰρ ὑπὸ τῶν τεχνῶν γινόμενα τὸ εὖ ἔχει ἐν αὐτοῖς· ἀρχεῖ οὖν ταῦτά πως ἔχοντα γένεσθαι· τὰ δὲ κατὰ τὰς ἀρετὰς γίνόμενα οὐκ ἐὰν αὐτά πως ἔχη, δικάίως ἢ σωφρόνως πράττεται, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐὰν ὁ πράττων πως ἔχων πράττη. 1105, a 26. A good musician is able to play badly when he chooses, as when he desires to amuse his friends, and the more command he has over his instrument the worse he can play.

good. Most people do not take this course; they betake themselves to discussion, and imagine that they are seeking for truth and that so they will become virtuous characters; doing what patients often do who listen attentively to what their doctor says, but follow none of his directions. As the latter will never get a healthy body by such treatment, so neither will the former get a sound mind by such truth-seeking.”⁴⁶

CHAPTER 5.—“Now what is virtue? There are three phenomena of mind: Feelings, capacities, and habits; and of these three good conduct is one.⁴⁷ By feelings we mean desire, anger, fear, confidence, envy, joy, friendship, hatred, longing—in a word, states followed by pleasure and pain; ⁴⁸ capacities are the possibilities of entering into such states, and habits are dispositions, either good or bad, in relation to feelings.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ εὔ οὖν λέγεται ὅτι ἐκ τοῦ τὰ δίκαια πράττειν ὁ δίκαιος γίνεται καὶ ἐκ τοῦ τὰ σώφρονα ὁ σώφρων· ἐκ δὲ τοῦ μὴ πράττειν ταῦτα οὐδεὶς ἂν οὐδὲ μελλήσῃε γίνεσθαι ἀγαθός. ἀλλ’ οἱ πολλοὶ ταῦτα μὲν οὐ πράττουσιν, ἐπὶ δὲ τὸν λόγον καταφεύγοντες οἴονται φιλοσοφεῖν καὶ οὕτως ἔσεσθαι σπουδαῖοι, ὁμοίον τι ποιοῦντες τοῖς κάμνουσιν, οἳ τῶν ἱατρῶν ἀκούουσι μὲν ἐπιμελῶς, ποιοῦσι δὲ οὐδὲν τῶν προσταττομένων· ὥσπερ οὖν οὐδ’ ἐκεῖνοι εὔ ἔξουσιν τὸ σῶμα οὕτω θεραπευόμενοι, οὐδ’ οὗτοι τὴν ψυχὴν οὕτω φιλοσοφοῦντες. 1105, b 9.

⁴⁷ ἐπεὶ οὖν τὰ ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ γινόμενα τρία ἐστί, πάθη δυνάμεις ἔξεις, τούτων ἂν τι εἴη ἡ ἀρετή. 1105, b 19. It is not easy to fix τὰ ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ γινόμενα—“things that happen in the mind,” “mental phenomena”—perhaps it was not intended to make it easy. Aristotle knew how to skate over thin ice when it suited his purpose. See note 50 post.

⁴⁸ λέγω δὲ πάθη μὲν ἐπιθυμίαν—ἔλεον, ὅλως οἷς ἔπεται ἡδονὴ ἢ λύπη. 1105, b 21.

⁴⁹ 1105, b 25.

Take anger, for example: we are badly disposed in regard to anger if we have the feeling violently or feebly; but if moderately, we are well disposed. Neither good nor bad conduct are cases of feeling; for we are neither called good or bad nor praised or blamed because we have feelings, but because we have them in a certain way. Feelings, moreover, arise unbidden, but deliberation and choice are necessary conditions of conduct. It may be added that feeling is a case of motion, and conduct a case of disposition. For the reasons stated conduct cannot be a mere capacity; and then there is the additional point that we get our capacities from nature, but we are not made by nature either good or bad, as I have already explained. If, then, good conduct is neither a feeling nor a capacity, it must be a habit.”⁵⁰

⁵⁰ The proof here given cannot be said to be satisfactory. It rests on a classification of states of mind—*τὰ ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ γινόμενα*—which excludes the phenomena of cognition altogether, and leaves it doubtful how far those of appetite (*ὄρεξις*) are included. If the proof is based on the division of Qualities in Kat. 8, as it certainly seems to be, appetite is excluded. If the division of Qualities in Kat. 8 be modified or extended, as it must be so as to include appetite, the division ceases to be exhaustive and the proof fails. This illustrates the difficulty occasionally arising from Aristotle's commendable habit of defining and classifying. The phenomena of mind, like the facts of human nature, are not easily embraced in a formula. Aristotle's definition of good conduct in this book, which is only made applicable to justice by a little management, and which is not applicable to friendship at all, and his analysis of mental phenomena in Book VI., exemplify the difficulties which attend attempts to make clear-cut distinctions in variable and fluctuating matter.

CHAPTER 6.—“ But it is not enough to show that good conduct is a habit, we must show what kind of habit it is. Now it may be laid down that excellence of every description puts that which possesses it in a good state and renders its work good ; the excellence of the eye, for instance, makes both the eye and its function good, for good eyes mean good sight, and the same may be said of the excellence of a horse. If, then, this holds universally, it follows that man’s excellence must be a habit whose result is that the man becomes good and does his proper work well. How this happens will appear more clearly if we consider the nature and essential quality of good conduct. In everything that is continuous and divisible you can take a larger or a smaller or an equal part, an equal part being that which is midway between too much and too little. This division may be made with reference either to the thing divided or with reference to ourselves. If the division be made with reference to the thing, the point equidistant from both ends is the mean and it is the same in all cases ; if the division be made relatively to ourselves, the mean is that which is neither too much nor too little—and this is not always one and the same. For example, if ten is too much and two too little, six will be the mean with regard to the thing—the objective mean ; but if ten pounds of beef are too much and two pounds are too little, it does not follow that the trainer will order six ; six may be too little for a great athlete like Milo and too much for a man just beginning training. So with running and wrestling. It is in this way that every man of accurate knowledge acts ; he avoids extremes and seeks the mean,—the mean in relation to himself, be it understood, and not the absolute mean. If, then, practical science proceeds in this way, looking to and adjusting its work to a mean, if good workmen do the same, and if excellence (by which we mean moral excellence) is (like Nature herself) a better and more

finished result than any art product, it will also aim at the mean.”⁵¹

“Good conduct or moral virtue is therefore a kind of mean—at all events it aims at being so.⁵² There are many ways of being wrong, but only one way of being right; evil belongs, as the Pythagoreans conjectured, to the ‘unlimited’ and good to the ‘limited,’ hence it is so easy to miss your mark and so hard to hit it. All this shows excess and defect to be distinctive of bad conduct, and moderation to be distinctive of good conduct.”⁵³

“Good conduct, therefore, is a habit of acting as you choose to act, in a manner subjectively moderate; moderation being ascertained by reason, in effect by the reason of the prudent, sensible man. Moderation is something between the two evils of too much and too little.”⁵⁴

“Hence, if we look to the essence and formal cause of

⁵¹ ἡ δ' ἀρετὴ πάσης τέχνης ἀκριβεστέρα καὶ ἀμείνων ἐστὶν ὥσπερ καὶ ἡ φύσις, τοῦ μέσου ἂν εἴη στοχαστική. 1006, b 14. What is the meaning of this? How are we to compare a good action (say Alkestis' self-sacrifice) with a good work of art (say a statue by Pheidias)? Comparison implies a reference to a common standard, but there is no common standard of conduct and art—οὐκ ὁμοίόν ἐστι ἐπὶ τε τῶν τέχνων καὶ τῶν ἀρετῶν. Conduct is certainly not so “exact” as art; is it more finished—ἀκριβεστέρα?

⁵² τὸ δὲ μέσον ἐπαινεῖται καὶ κατορδουταί· ταῦτα δὲ ἄμφω τῆς ἀρετῆς. μεσότης τις ἄρα ἐστὶν ἡ ἀρετή, στοχαστική γε οὕσα τοῦ μέσου. 1106, b 26.

⁵³ καὶ διὰ ταῦτ' οὖν τῆς μὲν κακίας ἡ ὑπερβολὴ καὶ ἡ ἔλλειψις, τῆς δ' ἀρετῆς ἡ μεσότης. 1106, b 33.

⁵⁴ ἔστιν ἄρα ἡ ἀρετὴ ἕξις προαιρετική, ἐν μεσότητι οὕσα τῇ πρὸς ἡμᾶς, ὠρισμένη λόγῳ καὶ ᾧ ἂν ὁ φρόνιμος ὀρίσειεν. μεσότης δὲ δύο κακιῶν, τῆς μὲν καθ' ὑπερβολὴν τῆς δὲ κατ' ἔλλειψιν. 1106, b 36.

good conduct it is a mean, but if we look to its final cause it is an extreme.⁵⁵ Now, not every feeling or action is capable of moderation; there are feelings such as malicious pleasure and shamelessness, and actions such as adultery or theft, whose very names show them to be implicated with vice: ⁵⁶ in such matters you can never be right; correctness of procedure—the right person, the right time and place, are out of the question, and the same is true with regard to injustice, cowardice, and self-indulgence; to suppose that there can be moderation in these extremes would imply that there can be an excess of an excess and a defect of a defect, and that both excess and defect may be a mean.⁵⁷ In a word, there is no such thing as being moderately excessive or moderately defective, nor on the other hand can there be too much or too little of moderation.” (1107, a 25.)

CHAPTER 7.—“ But it is not enough that this should be stated generally, it must be shown to fit in with actual facts. In discussions on conduct, general propositions are nearly valueless; it is when you come to particulars that you have a chance of getting to the truth, for it is with particulars that conduct deals. Statements about conduct must therefore harmonise with facts.⁵⁸ We may illus-

⁵⁵ διὸ κατὰ μὲν τὴν οὐσίαν καὶ τὸν λόγον τὸν τὸ τί ἦν εἶναι λέγοντα μεσότης ἐστὶν ἡ ἀρετή, κατὰ δὲ τὸ ἄριστον καὶ τὸ εὖ ἀκρότης. 1107, a 6.

⁵⁶ ἓνα γὰρ εὐθὺς ὠνόμασται συνειλημμένα μετὰ τῆς φανλότητος. 1107, a 9.

⁵⁷ ἔσται γὰρ οὕτω γε ὑπερβολῆς καὶ ἐλλείψεως μεσότης καὶ ὑπερβολῆς ὑπερβολῇ καὶ ἑλλειψις ἐλλείψεως. 1107, a 20.

⁵⁸ ἐν γὰρ τοῖς περὶ τὰς πράξεις λόγοις οἱ μὲν καθόλου κενώτεροί εἰσιν, οἱ δ' ἐπὶ μέρους ἀληθινώτεροι· περὶ γὰρ τὰ καθ' ἕκαστα αἱ πράξεις, δεόν δ' ἐπὶ τούτων συμφωνεῖν. 1107, a 29.

trate this with the help of a diagram. Courage is a middle state between fear and confidence: the man who has no fear at all has no name; he who is overconfident is called rash; those who are timid exceedingly and more than usually wanting in confidence are called cowards. With regard to pleasure and pain—not all pleasures, of course, and still less all pains—self-restraint is a middle state and self-indulgence is an error in excess; the corresponding error in defect is scarcely ever met with, and therefore has no name—we may call it insensibility. The mean in the matter of acquiring and spending wealth is liberality; the excess and defect are respectively called extravagance and stinginess. These last states are opposed to one another both in the matter of excess and of defect; the spendthrift gets too little and gives too much, the stingy man gets too much and gives too little. We are speaking now quite generally, more exact definitions will be given afterwards.

“There are other habits which have to do with wealth, of which knowing how to spend properly—a different thing from liberality inasmuch as it deals with expenditure on a large scale—is the mean, and vulgar ostentation or inability to spend with good taste is the excess; the defect is doing what should be done, but on an insufficient scale. As to honour and dishonour the middle state is magnanimity, the excess braggadocio and the defect poorness of spirit. There is, moreover, a habit which is to magnanimity in respect of being on a small scale, exactly what liberality is to the power of spending magnificently, for it is possible to be either too eager for honour or to care about it too little; and the errors in question are ambition and the want of it, the middle state has no name. These tendencies (with the exception of ambition) having no name, the extremes consider that they have a right to

the middle place,⁵⁹ and in fact we sometimes call the man who is moderate ambitious, and sometimes wanting in ambition—occasionally we praise both. There is also a mean and an excess and a defect with respect to anger, and as these states can hardly be said to have names, let us call the mean gentleness and the excess and defect violent temper and want of spirit. There are also three other mean states which, although they differ, have a certain likeness, being all shown in social conduct and speech; their difference is that one of them relates to truth in such matters and the other two to pleasure,—pleasure referring in the one case to amusement and in the other to general conduct in society.⁶⁰ We mention conduct of this kind in order that it may be seen that, without exception, the mean is praised and the extremes blamed. Most of these habits want distinctive names, but we must endeavour here as in other cases to coin names for the sake of clearness and that our meaning may be readily followed.⁶¹ Now as to the habit of truthfulness; the man in the middle is one who speaks truly, the imitation of this on the side of exaggeration is boastfulness, and on the other side self-depreciation.⁶²

⁵⁹ ἀνώνυμοι δὲ καὶ αἱ διαθέσεις, πλὴν ἡ τοῦ φιλοτίμου φιλοτιμία. ὅθεν ἐπιδικάζονται οἱ ἄκροι τῆς μέσης χώρας. 1107, b 30.

⁶⁰ τούτου δὲ τὸ μὲν ἐν παιδιᾷ τὸ δ' ἐν πᾶσι τοῖς κατὰ τὸν βίον. 1108, a 13. "τὰ κατὰ τὸν βίον" are more accurately defined in 1128, b 8 as "ἐν ταῖς κατὰ τὸν ἄλλον βίον ὁμιλίαις."

⁶¹ εἰσὶ μὲν οὖν καὶ τούτων τὰ πλείω ἀνώνυμα, πειρατέον δ', ὥσπερ καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν ἄλλων, αὐτοὺς ὀνοματοποιεῖν σαφηνείας ἕνεκα καὶ τοῦ εὐπαρακολουθήτου. 1108, a 16.

⁶² "Self-depreciation"; the Greek word is "irony," pretending to less than you know, especially on familiar subjects of knowledge. 1127, b 22.

With regard to giving pleasure in moments of recreation the mean habit is liveliness, the excess buffoonery and the defect sourness; as to pleasure-giving in other circumstances, the man who is pleasant in a right way is a friend; he who overdoes it, if he have no motive, is called pleasant, if for his own ends, a flatterer, whilst the man who has no agreeable qualities at all and is always unpleasant may be called snappish and sour.⁶³

“ There are also mean states in the feelings. Shame is not a virtue, yet the person who exhibits it is praised. But here the doctrine of the mean applies; the man who is always blushing is called bashful, his opposite is brazen-faced, and the one who is between the two is modest.⁶⁴ Rightful indignation is a mean between envy and malicious pleasure; these feelings arise when pleasure and pain touch one's neighbour. Rightful indignation is felt at undeserved prosperity: envy goes beyond this and is always sorry at the good fortune of others; the malicious man is so far from being sorry at the misfortunes of his neighbour that he rejoices in them.⁶⁵ But we shall have the opportunity of speaking of these matters hereafter as well as of justice and the intellectual virtues, and of showing how they are mean states.” ⁶⁶

⁶³ δύσερίς τις καὶ δύσκολος. 1108, a 30.

⁶⁴ καταπλήξ ὁ πάντα αἰδούμετος—ἀναίσχυντος—αἰδήμων. 1108, a 34. In 1128, b 10, Aristotle says, περὶ δὲ αἰδοῦς ὥς τινος ἀρετῆς οὐ προσήκει λέγειν· πάθει γὰρ μᾶλλον ἔοικεν ἢ ἔξει. ὀρίζεται γοῦν φόβος τις ἀδοξίας. This definition would, according to the classification of mental states adopted in 1105, b 20, disentitle shame to be called a virtue of conduct.

⁶⁵ νέμεσις—φθόνος—ἐπιχαιρεκακία. 1108, a 35.

⁶⁶ 1108, b 8. Aspasius accepted the expression λογικαὶ

CHAPTER 8.—“There being, then, these three tendencies,⁶⁷ one towards excess and one towards defect, both bad, and one to the mean, which is good, they are all opposed to each other in a certain way; the extremes are opposed to each other and also to the mean, and the mean is opposed to the extremes. For just as the equal is greater with reference to the less and less with reference to the greater, so the mean habits are more if you look to the defects and less if you look to the excesses, as well in the case of feeling as of action. For comparing a courageous man with a coward he appears rash, but with a rash man a coward; so a self-restrained man seems self-indulgent with respect to one who is completely indifferent, and indifferent if compared with one who is self-indulgent; a generous man seems a spendthrift as compared with a niggard, a niggard if compared with a spendthrift, Hence the extremes push the mean from one to the

ἀρεταί used here as equivalent to *διανοητικαὶ ἀρεταί*, and by some suspected because *λογικός* is said not to be an Aristotelian word in this sense. He says *περὶ δικαιοσύνης ὕστερον ἐρεῖν ἐπαγγέλεται* [*Ἀριστοτέλης*] *καὶ περὶ τῶν λογικῶν ἀρετῶν*. Asp. p. 55. 27; edit. Heylbut. The real difficulty is caused by the promise to show how the intellectual virtues are mean states. Aspasius does not notice this.

⁶⁷ When Aristotle speaks strictly he distinguishes a *διάθεσις* or tendency, from a *ἥξις* or habit: a habit is a tendency which has become chronic. Occasionally, as here, he uses the words indiscriminately. *Διάθεσις* is used five times in the Ethics, and in four times out of the five it is found in this and in the preceding chapter.

other,⁶⁸ and the coward calls the brave man rash and the rash man calls him coward, and similarly in other cases. This being the general character of the opposition, it is most marked as between the extremes, for they lie farther from one another than either does from the mean. Another point is that there are some extremes which resemble the mean, as in the cases of rashness and courage and extravagance and generosity; things which lie farthest away from one another are defined as contraries, from which it follows that the most marked contraries are farthest apart. The chief opposition to the mean is sometimes a defect and sometimes an excess; in the case of courage, not rashness but cowardice is most strongly opposed to the mean state, and with self-restraint it is not indifference but self-indulgence. There are two reasons for this, one depends on the nature of the thing, for it is because in fact one extreme is more like the mean than the other, that the dissimilar one is placed in opposition. This is one reason, depending on the nature of the thing; the other reason is relative to ourselves; for the things to which we have a natural tendency are more opposed to the mean state. For instance, our natural tendency is towards pleasure, and hence we are more easily carried in the direction of self-indulgence than of moderation.⁶⁹ The things in the direction

⁶⁸ διὸ καὶ ἀπωθοῦνται τὸν μέσον οἱ ἄκροι ἐκάτερος πρὸς ἐκάτερον. 1108, b 23. A lively and expressive metaphor showing how good people get jostled in life. It is a companion picture to τῶν ἐν τῇ βίῳ καλῶν καγαθῶν οἱ πράττοντες ὀρθῶς ἐπήβολοι γίνονται. 1099, a 5.

⁶⁹ πρὸς ἃ γὰρ αὐτοὶ μᾶλλον πεφύκαμέν πως, ταῦτα μᾶλλον ἐναντία τῇ μέσῳ φαίνεται.—ταῦτ' οὖν μᾶλλον ἐναντία λέγομεν, πρὸς ἃ ἢ ἐπίδοσις μᾶλλον γίνεται. 1109, a 13, 16. This

of which we tend to move are thus most opposed to the mean."

CHAPTER 9.—"What has been said is enough to prove that it is a matter of no small difficulty to be good. To hit the mean is in every case difficult; not everybody can find the centre of a circle, only he who knows how to do it; and so, although every one can be angry or lavish with his money, it is not easy to indulge your feelings or conduct yourself properly in time, place, and circumstance. The man who aims at the mean should in the first place avoid the extreme which happens to be farthest away from it; as Calypso advised Odysseus—

"Steer well outside the wave and spray,"

for one extreme is more likely to lead you wrong than the other.⁷⁰ Since, then, it is hard to hit the middle exactly, the next best thing is to choose the lesser of two evils, which can be best done by following the course just pointed out.⁷¹ Next we ought to consider in what direction we are personally most easily carried,

broad statement of the natural wickedness of mankind does not agree with what we read in Book VI. as to their natural virtue: *πᾶσι γὰρ δοκεῖ ἕκαστα τῶν ἠθῶν ὑπάρχειν φύσει πως· καὶ γὰρ δίκαιοι καὶ σωφρονικοὶ καὶ ἀνδρεῖοι καὶ τᾶλλα ἔχομεν εὐθὺς ἐκ γενετῆς.* 1144, b 4.

⁷⁰ τῶν γὰρ ἄκρων τὸ μὲν ἐστὶν ἀμαρτωλότερον τὸ δ' ἥττον. 1109, a 33.

⁷¹ κατὰ τὸν δεύτερον, φασί, πλοῦν τα ἐλάχιστα ληπτέον τῶν κακῶν. 1109, a 34. The *δεύτερος πλοῦς* was the second best way of getting the ship along, namely by taking to the oars, as sufficiently appears from the *Odyssey*.

for different people have different natural tendencies.⁷² We shall know this by the pleasure and pain we feel, and we ought to force ourselves in the contrary direction, for if we lead ourselves far away from error we shall arrive at the mean, as people do who straighten crooked sticks. But always and chiefly must we be on our guard against pleasure, for we are not impartial judges of her. In the presence of pleasure we should feel as the Trojan elders felt in the presence of Helen, and we should always repeat their words,⁷³ for thus, as they said, "by sending her away," we shall be the less likely to err.

If we follow these rules we shall, to put it shortly, be best able to hit the mean. It is by no means easy to discriminate, with anger for example, exactly how much, how long, and with whom we ought to be angry, and slight deviations are therefore excusable, but marked deviations are inexcusable, for a man cannot make them unconsciously. How far blame should go cannot easily be put into words, nor can we precisely define any object of our sensations; these are particular matters and the determination is a matter of taste.⁷⁴

⁷² σκοπεῖν δὲ δεῖ πρὸς ἃ καὶ αὐτοὶ εὐκατάφοροί ἐσμεν· ἄλλοι γὰρ πρὸς ἄλλα πεφύκαμεν. 1109, b 1.

⁷³ αἰνῶς ἀθανάτρσι θεῆς εἰς ὧπα ἔοικεν·
ἀλλὰ καὶ ὥς τοίη περ ἑοῦς' ἐν νηυσὶ νεέσθω,
μηδ' ἡμῖν τεκέεσσί τ' ὀπίσσω πῆμα λίποιτο.

Il. 3. 158.

⁷⁴ ὁ δὲ μέχρι τίνος καὶ ἐπὶ πόσον ψεκτὸς οὐ ῥάδιον τῇ λόγῳ ἀφορίσαι· οὐδὲ γὰρ ἄλλο οὐδὲν τῶν αἰσθητῶν· τὰ δὲ τοιαῦτα ἐν τοῖς καθ' ἕκαστα, καὶ ἐν τῇ αἰσθήσει ἢ κρίσει. 1109, b 20.

REMARKS

WITH the exception of the definitions of voluntary action and moral choice and responsibility, both to be dealt with in the next book, Aristotle's Ethical theory has now been stated, and we can see its general relation to the Sokratic and Platonic systems. Good conduct, is not, as Sokrates maintained, simply a question of accurate knowledge; still less is it, as Plato thought, a matter of transcendental knowledge; it is essentially relative and variable, dependent on time, place, and circumstance, like the course steered by the navigator or the advice given by the physician. It is not so much a matter of private duty as of public and political concern, and as such is capable of being justified and enforced by statesmen from different points of view: its basis is physical and physiological; not intellectual or ontological.

By virtue or excellence Aristotle means in general something as complete as it is in its nature to be; by vice he means something which mars that completeness.⁷⁵ And inasmuch as the completeness of an organ or of an organic compound is judged by the way in which its work is performed, the virtue of anything of

⁷⁵ ἀλλ' ἡ μὲν ἀρετὴ τελείωσις τις—ἡ δὲ κακία φθορὰ τούτου καὶ ἔκστασις. Phys. 7. 3. 246, a 13–16.

that kind, an eye, a horse, a man, a polity, is the expression of its functional completeness.⁷⁶

To the attainment of this completeness in the sphere of conduct several conditions have already been shown to be necessary—first, action: we cannot rely on nature or teaching, we must ourselves act; next, the action must be habitual; there is a great difference between doing a thing once and doing it often. It is a fact which we have to accept without endeavouring to explain, that repeated acts become easy in proportion to their repetition:

“Refrain to-night

And that shall lend a kind of easiness

To the next abstinence: the next more easy:

For use almost can change the stamp of Nature.”

Thirdly, the act must be intentional, and lastly it must be moderate. Aristotle has embodied the last requirement in what is called the doctrine of the mean, a rule which he deduces not from any *a priori* considerations but from observing what takes place in organic life. He had noticed that the organs of the body are arranged, in order as he supposed, to counter-balance one another, and “everything requires a counter-balance in order that moderation and a mean may be struck.”⁷⁷ He sees that the special senses, like all the bodily organs, are unfitted for their work by being overtaxed,⁷⁸ and the experience of the gymnastic trainer

⁷⁶ πᾶσα ἀρετή, οὗ ἂν ἡ ἀρετή, αὐτό τε εἶ ἔχον ἀποτελεῖ καὶ τὸ ἔργον αὐτοῦ εἶ ἀποδίδωσιν. Eth. 2. 6. 1106, a 15.

⁷⁷ ἅπαντα δεῖται τῆς ἐναντίας ῥοπῆς, ἵνα τυγχάνῃ τοῦ μετρίου καὶ τοῦ μέσου. De Part. Animal. 2. 7. 652, b 16.

⁷⁸ φθείρει ἕκαστον ὑπερβάλλον. De Anima 3. 2. 426, a 30.

and of the medical man confirms this observation. Similarly in the higher kind of organisms, in political systems. The polity or normal constitution is said by Aristotle to be a compromise between the opposite defects of oligarchy and democracy, resulting in a mean form of constitution by which the excesses of both are avoided,⁷⁹ and these analogies point to the inference that in the closely allied matter of conduct moderation makes for excellence.⁸⁰

This conception of moral excellence as moderation is spoken of with contempt by Plato, who calls it "popular and political virtue" and ranks it with the conduct which is found in communities of social insects like bees, wasps, and ants.⁸¹

⁷⁹ ἡ δὲ σύνταξις ὅλη βούλεται μὲν εἶναι μήτε δημοκρατία μήτε ὀλιγαρχία, μέση δὲ τούτων ἣν καλοῦσι πολιτείαν. Polit. 2. 6. 1265, b 26.

So Euripides, of the centre party—

τρίων δὲ μοίρων ἡ 'ν μέσῳ σώζει πόλιν.

⁸⁰ The rule in conduct applies, as Aristotle does not fail to remind us, to art (1106, b 9), and he has himself so applied it in his description of the hero of tragedy (Poet. 13. 1453, a 7). He might have pointed out that it is shown in the exercise of the senses as well as in physical training; powerful lights or sounds being painful and sometimes destructive of the senses, very weak ones failing to excite them, and moderate excitations giving pleasure and promoting a healthy function.

⁸¹ Οὐκοῦν εὐδαιμονέστατοι, ἔφη, καὶ τούτων εἰσὶ καὶ εἰς βέλτιστον τόπον ἰόντες οἱ τὴν δημοτικὴν καὶ πολιτικὴν ἀρετὴν ἐπιτετηδευκότες, ἣν δὴ καλοῦσι σωφροσύνην τε καὶ δικαιοσύνην ἐξ ἔθους τε καὶ μελέτης γεγонуῖαν ἄνευ φιλοσοφίας τε καὶ νοῦ; Πῶ δὴ οὗτοι εὐδαιμονέστατοι; "Ὅτι τούτους εἰκὸς ἐστὶν εἰς τοιοῦτον πάλιν ἀφικνεῖσθαι πολιτικόν τε καὶ ἡμέρον γένος ἢ

The depreciation of conduct "proceeding from habit and training" which Sokrates expresses in the Phædo is repeated in various forms by writers who distinguish true from what they call habitual morality, much to the disadvantage of the latter. The doctrine of the mean is criticised by Kant from a different point of view, namely, on the ground that it makes the difference between virtue and vice merely quantitative. Kant has correctly stated Aristotle's position. That actions should be habitual, voluntary and deliberate is a *sine quâ non* of moral conduct of all kinds, bad and good, but the *difference* between bad and good conduct is given by the degree of the action, whether it is much or little, or as Kant expresses it—it is a quantitative difference.⁸² And why not? it is not on the face of it an untenable proposition. For practical purposes differences of quantity are as important as differences of quality. The middle course must, Aristotle points out, be intentionally taken, taken for the sake of being moderate and for no other reason (1105, a 32),—not, for instance, that the passions may be more fully gratified. These conditions given, distinctions of quantity are as good and no better than distinctions of quality. Categories are a

που μελιττῶν ἢ σφηκῶν ἢ μυρμήκων ἢ καὶ εἰς ταῦτόν γε πάλιν τὸ ἀνθρώπινον γένος, καὶ γίγνεσθαι ἐξ αὐτῶν ἀνδρας μετρίους. Plato, Phædo. 82 A-B. The protest against moderation here lodged by Sokrates with reference to conduct is repeated by Victor Hugo in reference to art, in the shape of a criticism of the dramatists of the French classical school. See page 141 post.

⁸² ἕξεις δὲ καθ' ἃς πρὸς τὰ πάθη ἔχομεν εὖ ἢ κακῶς, οἷον πρὸς τὸ ὀργισθῆναι, εἰ μὲν σφοδρῶς ἢ ἀναιμένως, κακῶς ἔχομεν, εἰ δὲ μέσως, εὖ· ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ πρὸς τὰλλα. Eth. 2. 5. 1105, b 25.

convenience of thought and language, but they are distinctions *a parte hominis* and not *a parte universi*. The category of quality is not a prerogative category. No one supposes that nature has stowed things away into ten or any other number of watertight compartments for the convenience of logicians, and labelled them in a certain order of precedence. That virtue and vice should shade into one another by degrees may very well be held by these who, with Aristotle, consider physical organisation and transmitted tendencies, the result of former physical organisations, to be factors in conduct; it will naturally be dissented from by those who believe that there are absolute forms of justice and injustice, temperance and intemperance, courage and cowardice; but Aristotle does not agree with these assumptions, and it has not as yet been shown that he is wrong. So, too, those who deny any conduct to be good which is not determined by the supreme authority of conscience, or which is not under the control of a completely fashioned will, or which is not due to a change of nature, or which does not follow as the result of conversion or of a new heart, may object to the doctrine of the mean, but their objection is only another way of saying that they think their ethics to be better than Aristotle's, which may or may not be true. When it has been settled which among these competing theories is the correct one, it will be time enough to apologise for saying that the difference between virtue and vice is quantitative.

However the matter may stand on the footing of theory, as a matter of practice the doctrine of the mean is well adapted to secure the object which Aristotle had in view, which was, not to show how men can be made ideally good, but to teach politicians how to draw an Education Bill, a matter in which little help is to be got from absolute morals:—*ἄπορον*

τί ὠφεληθήσεται ὁ τὴν ἰδέαν αὐτὴν τεθεαμένος. If by compelling or inducing people to avoid extremes a habit of avoiding extremes can be created, a very considerable practical result will have been achieved, and one which statesmen and social reformers, and a good many moralists besides, may be expected to be well satisfied with. Aristotle's aim did not go beyond this. If it be objected that good conduct cannot be divided into sections; that a man cannot be generous and a coward or temperate and mean, and that unorganised virtue is consequently no virtue at all, it may be replied that Aristotle does not admit the fact stated, which is moreover contradicted by the ordinary experience of life.⁸³

Aristotle observes, what is quite true, that extremes in conduct are opposed to each other and to the mean; but he goes on to advance the more questionable proposition that there is no medium in extremes, and that actions like theft and murder are blamed as soon as named and cannot be either better or worse (1107, a 9). Neither proposition is quite true; in some societies they are not blamed at all, and even when they are blamed they are not always blamed with equal severity, for we very properly allow distinctions of more and less in conduct of which we nevertheless disapprove. A highwayman, like Claude Duval, who politely requests your purse is not so reprehensible as a ruffian who strangles you in the street in order to seize it from you. But theft and murder are not always blamed: in some communities they are tolerated and in some they are even approved. Aristotle knew his Homer too well not to be aware that in the state of society described in the poems, piracy, far

⁸³ πολλοὶ γὰρ ἐν μὲν τοῖς οἰκείοις τῇ ἀρετῇ δύνανται χρῆσθαι, ἐν δὲ τοῖς πρὸς ἕτερον ἀδυνατοῦσιν. Eth. 5. 1. 1129, b 33.

from being blamed, was considered, as Thucydides tells us, a permissible and even honourable pursuit;⁸⁴ and as to cattle lifting, it was as much one of the recognised pursuits of a country gentleman then as hunting is now.

Difficult as it is to define the exact point of right action, and although some variation either way is permissible, the matter cannot be left open, and the ultimate standard to which Aristotle refers us is a personal one; the opinion of the prudent, sensible man, the man conversant with life and affairs, whose advice is, in fact, always sought in cases of difficulty. This is what he means when he says that the middle point is to be determined "by reason and by the reason by which a prudent man would determine it."⁸⁵ The ethical standard is not intuitively perceived, nor is it furnished by any special faculty; it is derived from the general sense of the community in which the agent lives expressing itself in terms of praise and blame; by that common and political morality which Plato derides and repudiates. This social atmosphere, weighing upon us with a force which is not less real because it is unfelt, is in most cases sufficient to indicate, without more, where the line of conduct should be drawn; in cases of doubt we must seek advice. The standard is necessarily a variable one; as Aristotle tells us, there is no universal agreement.⁸⁶ Courage, for instance, is differently estimated

⁸⁴ οὐκ ἔχοντός πω αἰσχύνῃν τούτου τοῦ ἔργου, φέροντος δέ τι καὶ δόξης μᾶλλον. Thucyd. i. 5. 8.

⁸⁵ μεσότης—ὥρισμένη λόγῳ καὶ ᾧ ἂν ὁ φρόνιμος δρίσειεν. 1107, a 1.

⁸⁶ περὶ τε τῶν πρὸς ἀρετὴν οὐθέν ἐστιν ὁμολογούμενον· καὶ γὰρ τὴν ἀρετὴν οὐ τὴν αὐτὴν εὐθὺς πάντες τιμῶσιν ὥστ' εὐλόγως διαφέρονται πρὸς τὴν ἄσκησιν αὐτῆς. Polit. viii. 2. 1337, b 1.

and approved in different places. The Spartan Aristodemus, who owing to severe illness was unable to take part in the battle of Thermopylæ, was branded by his fellow-citizens as a coward, but he would not have been thought a coward at Athens or Corinth. In a society like that of Lacedæmon, where the chief object of the law maker was to foster the military spirit, a man, not to be thought a poltroon, would have to be what would elsewhere be considered foolhardy; and therefore among the agencies which go to create the body of ethical sentiment Aristotle includes the forms of constitution; "The virtue of a citizen," he says, "is necessarily relative to the political constitution."⁸⁷ Among the qualifications of a good magistrate one is that he should have the virtue and justice appropriate to the form of government he has to administer, "For if," he says, "the conception of what is just is not the same in all governments, its practice must necessarily differ."⁸⁸

⁸⁷ διὸ τὴν ἀρετὴν ἀναγκαῖον εἶναι τοῦ πολίτου πρὸς τὴν πολιτείαν. *Polit.* iii. 4. 1276, b 30. The goodness of good people is not, as Sokrates maintained, one and the same; it varies with their circumstances.

⁸⁸ τρία δέ τινα χρὴ ἔχειν τοὺς μέλλοντας ἄρξαι τὰς κυρίας ἀρχάς, πρῶτον μὲν φιλίαν πρὸς τὴν καθεστῶσαν πολιτείαν, ἔπειτα δύναμιν μεγίστην τῶν ἔργων τῆς ἀρχῆς, τρίτον δ' ἀρετὴν καὶ δικαιοσύνην ἐν ἐκάστη πολιτείᾳ τὴν πρὸς τὴν πολιτείαν· εἰ γὰρ μὴ ταῦτόν τὸ δίκαιον κατὰ πάσας τὰς πολιτείας, ἀνάγκη καὶ τῆς δικαιοσύνης εἶναι διαφοράς. *Polit.* v. 9. 1309, a 33.

This variability of the moral standard in different societies, the assertion that the just is what is thought just in each state, affirmed by Aristotle, is denied by Plato. "There are those," he says (the followers of

As conceptions of right and wrong vary with the form of political constitution, they will be better in the better forms of constitutions, and in the best, that of absolute kingship, where the ruler is of surpassing goodness, "a god among men," or in an aristocracy where the aristocrats are good men as well as good citizens, you have a state of things ideally favourable to virtue and the happy life. Such rulers will by wise laws create a public training which will turn out citizens as good as the materials furnished by nature make possible. The ethical sentiment of such communities will be good with but little qualification, and the prudent man, the embodiment and representative of such sentiment, will be entitled to be called not only prudent but good.

Those who do not attend to Aristotle's repeated warning that in life and conduct we must be content with approximate truth, and who expect from moral

Protagoras) "who do not hesitate to maintain that in matters of justice and injustice, holiness and unholiness, it is impossible that there should be any natural and essential quality; but, say they, what is commonly thought to be true is true, when and so long as it is thought so to be." ἐκεῖ, οὗ λέγω, ἐν τοῖς δίκαιοις καὶ ἀδίκοις καὶ ὀσιόις καὶ ἀνοσίοις, ἐθέλουσιν ἰσχυρίζεσθαι ὡς οὐκ ἔστι φύσει αὐτῶν οὐδὲν οὐσίαν ἑαυτοῦ ἔχον, ἀλλὰ τὸ κοινῇ δόξαν τοῦτο γίγνεται ἀληθὲς τότε, ὅταν δόξῃ καὶ ὅσον ἂν δόκῃ χρόνον. Plato, Theæt. 172 A. The ethical standard here repudiated, τὸ κοινῇ δόξαν, is the one relied on by Aristotle, and implied in his reference to the arbitrament of the prudent man—the man of acknowledged good sense, the reflex of the opinions of his time and country. See Polit. iii. 4. where the question in Eth. 5. 2. (1130, b 29) whether the good man and the good citizen are the same is negatively answered.

philosophy more than it is able to give, are dissatisfied with this theory of conduct. To make the standard of right and wrong rest on such a fluctuating element as public opinion is to some minds an intolerable proposition, obliterating the distinction between virtue and vice, and breaking down the fence, never too strong, by which men are confined to the right course. The question, however, is one of fact. Can any distinct and permanent line be shown to exist between conduct qualified as good and bad. Does the opinion, even of good men, as to what is morally right vary from time to time? Suppose an earnest man in Athens in the middle of the fourth century to have had doubts whether he was justified in keeping slaves. He has been disturbed by the arguments of the jurists referred to by Aristotle in the *Politics*, who maintained that slavery was a violation of natural law and that the convention which sanctioned it was wrong.⁸⁹ We may imagine him to have known that Plato had justified the institution, but he decides on taking a second opinion and consults Aristotle. Aristotle assures him that there is no harm whatever in keeping slaves, unless they are Hellenes, and that to do so is equally for the benefit of the slave and himself. The institution of slavery, sanctioned by Plato, approved by Aristotle and defended by him against opposing critics, was acquiesced in by St. Paul and tolerated both in theory and practice by the Christian Church for many centuries after St. Paul's time; it was practised by the most civilised nations of Western Europe until the beginning of the last century, in spite of a dissenting minority who impeached the custom on the very ground on which

⁸⁹ τοῦτο δὲ τὸ δίκαιον πολλοὶ τῶν ἐν τοῖς νόμοις ὥσπερ ῥήτορα γράφονται παρανόμων. *Polit.* i. 6. 1255, a 7.

it was questioned in Aristotle's day. But in this matter, the arguments for and against which are within the reach of every one, public opinion has now so changed that the first man you meet in the street will tell you that to keep a slave is one of the most immoral things you can do.

Take a case simpler still, and more within the range of every-day experience. There are now probably not half a dozen people in Europe who think there is any harm in receiving interest for money. But authorities so considerable as Plato, Aristotle, Dante, and Bacon have all condemned it: Plato on the ground that it is inconsistent with the first principles of statesmanship; Aristotle on the ground that it is contrary to nature, interest being the child of money and money being naturally barren—"a breed for barren metal"; Bacon, on Scriptural authority, because a man is told that he must eat his bread in the sweat of his brow, and also because the usurer "doth plough upon Sundays"; Dante, on the grounds relied upon both by Aristotle and Bacon. It is not easy to maintain that in the world in which we live any other than a variable standard of ethical right prevails.

Aristotle's remarks on the relation of art to conduct are interesting and deserve the attention of art critics, many of whom take a too serious view of their subject. Good and bad art, like good and bad conduct, says Aristotle, is the result of habit; "by playing well on a guitar a man becomes a good guitar player, and by playing ill a bad one."⁹⁰ There is, moreover, between art and conduct an important similarity which distinguishes both of them from purely rational activity; they aim at moderation;—"good artists always keep the

mean before them and regulate their work with reference thereto." ⁹¹ Yet art and conduct are distinct. Art is not conduct, nor is conduct art. ⁹² The object of one is production, and its excellence is judged by its product and by that alone; the end of the other is action, and the nature of the action depends on the motive of the agent. Conduct to all appearance commendable may be in reality neutral or blameworthy if prompted by motives non-commendable or blameworthy; the agent must take a middle course for the sake of doing so. But in art neither the question of general character nor the motive inducing a particular work arises, and a man like Benvenuto Cellini, who, if he speaks truth of himself, left few crimes uncommitted, is rightly called a great artist.

Aristotle's observation that all good art is distinguished by an absence of exaggeration raises the much discussed question of the relative merits of the classical and romantic schools. Many modern critics protest on principle against what they consider the frigidity and formalism of the golden rule in art. Exuberant and unrestrained fertility of imagination and language, absence of reticence, neglect of proportion, contempt for the restraints of probability, are considered to be permissible provided they contribute to what is thought to be artistic effect. Victor Hugo, whose admiration for Shakespeare was sincere if not always discreet,

⁹¹ 1106, b 9.

⁹² τοῦ δ' ἐνδεχομένου ἄλλως ἔχειν ἐστὶ τι καὶ ποιητὸν καὶ πρακτόν· ἕτερον δ' ἐστὶ ποίησις καὶ πρᾶξις (πιστεύομεν δὲ περὶ αὐτῶν καὶ τοῖς ἐξωτερικοῖς λόγοις)· ὥστε καὶ ἡ μετὰ λόγου ἔξις πρακτικὴ ἕτερόν ἐστι τῆς μετὰ λόγου ποιητικῆς ἔξεως. διὸ οὐδὲ περιέχεται ὑπ' ἀλλήλων· οὔτε γὰρ ἡ πρᾶξις ποίησις οὔτε ἡ ποίησις πρᾶξις ἐστίν. 1140, a 1.

praised him most highly for what many readers consider one of his defects. He protests against moderation in art, as Plato protested against moderation in conduct. He ridicules the notion of a writer keeping within bounds.

"Il est réservé et discret. Vous êtes tranquille avec lui ; il n'abuse de rien. Il a, pardessus tout, une qualité bien rare ; il est sobre.

"Qu'est ceci ? Une recommandation pour un domestique ? Non, c'est un éloge pour un écrivain. Une certaine école, dite 'sérieuse,' a arboré de nos jours ce programme de poésie : sobriété. Il semble que toute la question soit de préserver la littérature des indigestions. Autrefois on disait : fécondité et puissance ; aujourd'hui l'on dit : tisane." ⁹³

The rule of the mean in art is thus criticised on opposite grounds to those by which the same rule is attacked in conduct ; in art, because it unduly restrains freedom, and in conduct, because it dangerously relaxes the bonds by which free action is confined.

With one important exception, that of choice, which stands over for discussion in the next book, Aristotle's definition of good moral conduct is now complete. It is a habit of acting in a way that avoids extremes. What are extremes cannot be ascertained by rule and measure ; you must have regard to time, place, circumstance, and to the personal idiosyncrasies of the agent ; practical reason, the general sense and sentiment of the community in which the agent happens to live, expressing itself in terms of praise and blame will give him the standard to which he ought to conform, and to which, if he does conform, as the Pythian priestess said, he will be right. In cases of real doubt he must get the best advice

⁹³ Victor Hugo, "Shakespeare," p. 272.

he can ; he is not bound to be right, he is only bound to do his best to be right. And inasmuch as the rule of conduct varies in different societies and some societies have better political arrangements than others, the best conduct will be found in the best constitution, and the man who best expresses the rule of conduct in that constitution will be the ideal guide. He will be "the good man" to whom we can look if we want to know how we should act.

CHAPTER III

Book III., Chapters 1-5.
(1109, b 27—1115, a 3).

VOLUNTARY ACTION, MORAL CHOICE, AND RESPONSIBILITY

ἐκ τοῦ βουλευσασθαι κρίναντες ὀρεγόμεθα κατὰ τὴν βούλευσιν. Eth. 3. 3. 1113, a 11.

οὕτως μὲν οὖν ἐπὶ τὸ κινεῖσθαι καὶ πράττειν τὰ ζῷα ὀρμῶσι, τῆς μὲν ἐσχάτης αἰτίας τοῦ κινεῖσθαι ὀρέξεως οὔσης, ταύτης δὲ γινομένης ἢ δι' αἰσθήσεως ἢ διὰ φαντασίας καὶ νοήσεως. τῶν δ' ὀρεγομένων πράττειν τὰ μὲν δι' ἐπιθυμίαν ἢ θυμὸν τὰ δὲ δι' ὄρεξιν ἢ βούλησιν τὰ μὲν ποιοῦσι τὰ δὲ πράττουσιν. De Motu Animal. 7. 701, a 33.

TEXT AND REMARKS

THE first five chapters of the third book, to which attention will now be directed, complete the definition of conduct. Good conduct has been described as a settled tendency to choose to act in a certain way, which tendency is created by repeatedly acting in that way. Of the actions which create the tendency we have learned that they must be moderate in degree, not too much or too little, and that what is moderate has to be settled in the given case by the good sense of the agent, with an ultimate reference, in case of doubt, to the man of acknowledged prudence as judge. But of choice we have been told nothing as yet beyond this, that it is an essential part of conduct and one of the things which distinguishes conduct from art.¹

The chapters now to be considered supply this omission and complete the formal definition of conduct by explaining what is meant by choice. The further question whether choice is self-determined or forced on the agent by external circumstances is separately and fully discussed. Now of the requisites of choice the first and most important is that the agent should be free to act.²

¹ Eth. 2. 4. 1105, a 26 sqq.

² "Choice," "preference" or "purpose," the nearest English equivalents of *προαίρεσις*, have the defect of calling attention to the rational side of the process to

Aristotle accordingly opens the matter with a discussion on what he calls "the Voluntary" and "the Involuntary," terms which he declares to require definition both as a matter of ethical theory and for the practical purpose of assisting legislators in assigning rewards and punishments.³

This reminder of the purpose of the *Ethics*, that it is a contribution to practical political science, is very apposite here, since Aristotle occasionally digresses into the path of purely speculative inquiry without notifying the reader of the fact, and raises questions which neither the politician, the legislator nor the ordinary citizen would think it necessary to answer. And his treatment is often highly argumentative, reminding one of the Platonic dialogue with its numerous digressions, suggested by verbal analogies or casual references. The definition of voluntary conduct is approached on the negative side by ascertaining in the first place what actions may properly be called involuntary. Very often, as he says in another place, a habit may best be known by considering its contrary;⁴ it is by this method that the habit of justice is ascertained by examining the

the exclusion of the equally important irrational side. What Aristotle means by choice is "impulse" or "propension," which may be unaccompanied by reason (as in the case of the lower animals or very young children) or may be guided by reason. The latter form is the one with which *Ethics* is chiefly but not exclusively concerned, unreasoning propension having a large share in determining conduct, especially in the case of irresolution.

³ *χρήσιμον δὲ καὶ τοῖς νομοθετοῦσι πρὸς τε τὰς τιμὰς καὶ τὰς κολάσεις.* 1109, b 34.

⁴ *πολλάκις μὲν οὖν γνωρίζεται ἡ ἐναντία ἕξις ἀπὸ τῆς ἐναντίας.* *Eth.* 5. 1. 1129, a 17.

various senses of injustice,⁵ and the same plan is adopted in dealing with voluntary conduct. Now the word "involuntary" may be used in three senses; it may mean—

(1) "That which is against your will"; or

(2) "That which is against your wish"; or

(3) "That which is neither wished nor willed," and which ought to be called, as Aristotle subsequently does call it, "non-voluntary."

Here, the first two cases only are under consideration; the third is discussed later on.⁶

CHAPTER 1.—Involuntary conduct in the first sense is defined by Aristotle as "that which is induced by external force of such kind and degree that the agent, who should rather be called the patient, contributes nothing whatever to it—as if one should be swept out of his course by the winds or carried off by brigands."⁷ In this case, obviously, a man is deprived of his freedom of action and absolved from responsibility with regard to it. But conduct which is against your *wish*, things which you do although you would rather not do them, stand, as regards responsibility, on a very different footing, although hard cases leading to doubt on the subject not seldom arise. A merchant assents to his goods being thrown overboard in a storm; he does not like it but he does it, lest a worse thing happen; or a tyrant threatens to kill or torture your wife and children unless you consent to some criminal or disgraceful act: these are called by Aristotle "mixed cases." Still, the action is voluntary, for you can

⁵ Eth. 5. 1. 1129, a 31.

⁶ Eth. 3. 1. 1110, b 18.

⁷ βίαιον δὲ οὗ ἡ ἀρχὴ ἔξωθεν, τοιαύτη οὖσα ἐν ᾗ μηδὲν συμβάλλεται ὁ πράττων ἢ ὁ πάσχων, οἷον εἰ πνεῦμα κομίσαι που ἢ ἄνθρωποι κύριοι ὄντες. Eth. 3. 1. 1110, a 1.

command the motion of your body and limbs at the time of action, and you are consequently a free agent.⁸ The ethical value of such actions is a different matter; we pity the merchant, and in many cases we excuse what is done under extreme and painful pressure, but there are some things which no compulsion can justify—a man ought to submit to anything rather than consent.⁹ Pleas of moral compulsion are sometimes put forward which will not bear examination; the reasons given by Alcmaeon for matricide in Euripides' play are said by Aristotle to be ridiculous. It would appear from the legend that Alcmaeon's father had ordered him to do it, and even threatened him if he refused; Aristotle suggests that however painful it may be to disobey your father, that is not a sufficient reason for murdering your mother. All mixed actions are therefore voluntary, because, being physically able to act, you determine to do so, however distressing or disagreeable it may be. The distinction here drawn, not in terms but in substance, between being willing to act and wishing or desiring to act is important, because the confusion between the two is a fertile source of misapprehension and inaccurate reasoning.

⁸ μικταὶ μὲν οὖν εἰσὶν αἱ τοιαῦται πράξεις, ὁίκασι δὲ μᾶλλον ἐκουσίοις· αἰρεταὶ γάρ εἰσι τότε ὅτε πράττονται, τὸ δὲ τέλος τῆς πράξεως κατὰ τὸν καιρὸν ἐστίν. Eth. 3. 1. 1110, a 11.

⁹ ἕνια δ' ἴσως οὐκ ἔστιν ἀναγκασθῆναι, ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον ἀποθανεῖον παθόντι τὰ δεινότατα. Eth. 3. 1. 1110, a 26.

—ambiguae si quando citabere testis
incertaeque rei, Phalaris licet imperet ut sis
falsus, et admoto dictet perjuriam tauro,
summum crede nefas animam praeferre pudori
et propter vitam vivendi perdere causas.

Polus, in Plato's *Gorgias*, said that despots can do as they will, killing, banishing and robbing people at their good pleasure. In opposition to him, Sokrates maintains that such men are, so to speak, wholly powerless; for that if any one does anything, he wills, not the thing he does, but that for the sake of which he does it; and inasmuch as good is the universal object of desire, a man who wills that which is bad cannot be said to will at all, and consequently must be admitted to be powerless. This ingenious piece of sophistry depends entirely on the confusion of the two senses of the word "will." The proposition on which Sokrates' conclusion rests, that a man wills, not what he does, but that for the sake of which he does it,¹⁰ is proved by him on this wise: "Do people who take medicine 'will' to take the medicine or do they 'will' the object of taking it—namely health?" "Do merchants 'will' to run the risks and endure the hardships of travel, or do they 'will' that for the sake of which they undergo those risks, namely to make money?"¹¹ This is merely a play on the two senses of "will." Traders desire to make money, no doubt, but they are also perfectly ready to take the risks of a voyage for the sake of doing so, however little they may desire

¹⁰ ἔάν τις τι πράττη ἕνεκά του, οὐ τοῦτο βούλεται, ὃ πράττει, ἀλλ' ἐκεῖνο οὗ ἕνεκα πράττει. Plato, *Gorg.* 467 D.

¹¹ τίς γὰρ βούλεται πλεῖν τε καὶ κινδυνεύειν καὶ πράγματ' ἔχειν; ἀλλ' ἐκεῖνο, οἶμαι, οὗ ἕνεκα πλέουσι, πλουτεῖν. Plato, *Gorg.* 467 D. Elsewhere they are distinguished; Prodicus, described as a precisian in language, is twitted by Sokrates for distinguishing them; καὶ γὰρ οὖν καὶ δεῖται τὸ ὑπὲρ Σιμωνίδου ἐπανόρθωμα τῆς σῆς μουσικῆς, ἥ τό τε βούλεσθαι καὶ ἐπιθυμεῖν διαιρεῖς ὡς οὐ ταῦτόν ὄν. Plato, *Protag.* 340 A.

those risks; they are free agents in the matter, and it is a misuse of language to say that they do not will because they do not wish.

The reasons which have been adduced to show that a man acts voluntarily in the presence of pain if he can command his bodily movements, apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to the case of pleasure.

In ultimate analysis all the motives which determine conduct are reducible to pleasure and pain: these are the two oars by which the human ship is steered. If pain does not deprive us of our freedom of action, *a fortiori* pleasure cannot do so. It is not, however, quite correct to say (with Aristotle in this place) that "everybody does everything for the sake of pleasure,"¹² for much of our conduct consists, as indeed he had just pointed out, in avoiding pain; but with regard to so much of our conduct as is motivated by pleasure, we are no more entitled to say that we are compelled by its attraction than to say that we are repelled by the deterrent influence of pain. Aristotle, however, thinks it necessary to put this beyond doubt. He makes a good point when he says, "Do we claim that we are compelled by pleasure when we have done something we are proud of? if not, we cannot have it both ways; we must not take credit to ourselves when we happen to be right and throw the blame on pleasure when we happen to be wrong."¹³

The compulsion which is sufficient to deprive an

¹² εἰ δέ τις τὰ ἡδέα καὶ τὰ καλὰ φαίη βίαια εἶναι—πάντα ἂν εἴη αὐτῷ βίαια· τούτων γὰρ χάριν πάντες πάντα πράττουσιν. Eth. 3. 1. 1110, b 9.

¹³ γελοῖον δὲ τὸ αἰτιᾶσθαι τὰ ἐκτός, ἀλλὰ μὴ αὐτὸν εὐθής-
ρατον ὄντα ὑπὸ τῶν τοιούτων, καὶ τῶν μὲν καλῶν ἑαυτόν, τῶν
δ' αἰσχυρῶν τὰ ἡδέα. Eth. 3. 1. 1110, b 13.

action of its character of freedom and make it involuntary in the sense of being "against our will" is accordingly limited by Aristotle to the single case of "force external to the agent, to whose effect he contributes nothing."¹⁴ But whenever the cause of movement is in the agent—whenever, at the moment of action, he is physically able to act and does so, however little he may wish it,—the action is involuntary in the sense of "against his wish," but voluntary in the sense of "with his will," for he determines, on a balance of considerations, in favour of action. Aristotle expresses this distinction by saying that the action is "really involuntary, but at the moment and weighing the circumstances voluntary."¹⁵

The actions hitherto described have been assumed to be done with full knowledge, but what must we say of actions done in ignorance?—are they voluntary or not? Before this question can be answered it is necessary to distinguish two very different kinds of ignorance: ignorance of general principles (described by the word *ἀγνοῶν*), and ignorance of particular facts (called *δι' ἄγνοϊαν*).

(1) The former or "general ignorance" is ignorance of the rules of conduct; ignorance of what you ought to do and abstain from;¹⁶ ignorance of the major premiss of the practical syllogism. These are things which are supposed to be known, and in fact are known, to every adult person in possession of the average measure

¹⁴ *ἔοικε δὲ τὸ βίαιον εἶναι οὗ ἕξωθεν ἡ ἀρχή, μηδὲν συμβαλλομένου τοῦ βιασθέντος.* Eth. 3. 1. 1110, b 15.

¹⁵ *καθ' αὐτὰ μὲν ἀκούσια, νῦν δὲ καὶ ἀντὶ τῶνδε ἐκούσια.* Eth. 3. 1. 1110, b 5.

¹⁶ *ἀγνοεῖν ἃ δεῖ πράττειν καὶ ὧν ἀφεκτέον.* Eth. 3. 1. 1110, b 28.

of intelligence. The rules in question vary, no doubt, in different times and societies, but they are constant in the same society at the same time. Speaking broadly, and within the limits of the accuracy alone possible when laying down propositions respecting conduct, these precepts or principles are known to every one; that they are not acted upon is the result, not of ignorance but of misconduct or vice,¹⁷ and consequently no one can be allowed to plead ignorance for the purpose of saying that he was not acting voluntarily, either in the sense of acting as he wished or as he willed.

(2) Ignorance of the particular facts of the case—the minor premiss of the syllogism of conduct—may or may not entitle a man to be considered an involuntary agent. Aristotle gives several examples of cases of particular ignorance; the case of the man who only wishing to show the action of a catapult, discharged it; of the man who, intending to administer medicine, gives poison by mistake,¹⁸ and many others. But he draws a distinction in these cases; sometimes he who acts in ignorance of a particular circumstance is sorry when he discovers what he has done, and sometimes he has no regrets; in the former case, we are told he must be considered to have acted involuntarily; in the latter he cannot be called an involuntary agent, for he was not sorry, nor can he be called a voluntary agent, for he did not know—he must therefore be called a non-voluntary agent.¹⁹ This distinction is not consistent with what

¹⁷ οὐ γὰρ ἡ ἐν τῇ προαιρέσει ἄγνοια αἰτία τοῦ ἀκουσίον ἀλλὰ τῆς μοχθηρίας. Eth. 3. 1. 1110, b 31.

¹⁸ καὶ ἐπὶ σωτηρίᾳ πίσας ἀποκτείνειν ἄν. Eth. 3. 1. 1111, a 13.

¹⁹ ὁ γὰρ δι' ἄγνοιαν πράξας ὅτιοῦν, μηδέν τι δυσχεραίνων ἐπὶ τῇ πράξει, ἐκὼν μὲν οὐ πέπραχεν, ὃ γε μὴ ᾔδει, οὔδ' αὖ

has been laid down in an earlier part of the chapter, that actions are qualified as voluntary or involuntary at the moment when they are done,²⁰ nor is it easy to see how the value of any action can be altered by the subsequent frame of mind of the doer; the proposition is, however, true to this extent, that his subsequent frame of mind is some evidence of what his state of mind would or might have been at the moment of action; some, but by no means conclusive, evidence, for much may happen in the interval. A man writes a letter respecting the sale of his estate, mentioning a price, but not intending to bind himself to sell. When subsequently, having received a reply, he learns that owing to rules of which he was ignorant he has entered into a binding contract, he may be sorry that he has written, but he may nevertheless choose to adopt it in order to avoid a Chancery suit. But neither the fact that he is sorry, nor that he adopts what he has done, can alter the intention he had when writing, or throw any but a doubtful light on his intention. Even if Aristotle's distinction be accepted, some limitation is necessary. A schoolboy puts half a sovereign into the plate at church in mistake for sixpence, and is sorry when he finds it out. It would not be fair to say that he has acted contrary either to his will or to his wish.

ἄκων, μὴ λυπούμενός γε· τοῦ δὲ δι' ἄγνοιαν ὁ μὲν ἐν μεταμελείᾳ ἄκων δοκεῖ, ὁ δὲ μὴ μεταμελόμενος, ἔπει ἕτερος, ἔστω οὐχ ἑκόν. Eth. 3. 1. 1110, b 19. When a man abuses an authority given him by the law he becomes a trespasser *ab initio*, for the law adjudges by the subsequent act, *quo animo*, for "acta exteriora indicant interiora secreta." 8. Rep. 146 b. (The Six Carpenters Case.)

²⁰ καὶ τὸ ἐκούσιον δὴ καὶ τὸ ἀκούσιον, ὅτε πράττει, λεκτέον. 1110, a 14.

To do him justice we must quantify his conduct, and say that, being sorry, he must be assumed to have contributed sixpence only, but that if he had been glad he would have been entitled to the credit of having given ten shillings. Aristotle's final conclusion is that acts are involuntary when done under compulsion or in ignorance of the particular facts of the case, and voluntary when the agent can control his own movements and is aware of the circumstances in which he is acting.²¹

CHAPTER 2.—We now come to the question of moral choice (*προαίρεσις*), or the subjective side of conduct, said by Aristotle to be a more critical test of it than acts themselves.²² The full understanding of the meaning of this term is the key to Aristotle's moral philosophy, but it cannot be said that in the *Ethics*, either here or elsewhere, there will be found a complete or clear account of it. The explanation in the *Ethics* must be supplemented by a reference to the author's psychological and physiological works. Three chapters are here given to the subject; in the first (Chapter 2 of Book III.) Aristotle marks off choice (preference, purpose) by a process of exclusion from other mental faculties and operations with which it had been or might be confused, and arrives at the conclusion that it involves a process of previous deliberation with an implication of preference. In the second chapter (Chapter 3 of the book) the process of previous deliberation is illustrated and explained, and we are told what

²¹ ὄντος δ' ἀκουσίον τοῦ βίᾳ καὶ δι' ἄγνοιαν, τὸ ἐκούσιον δόξειεν ἂν εἶναι οὐ ἢ ἀρχὴ ἐν αὐτῷ εἶδóτι τὰ καθ' ἕκαστα ἐν οἷς ἢ πρᾶξις. *Eth.* 3. 1. 1111, a 22.

²² οἰκειότατον γὰρ εἶναι δοκεῖ [ἢ προαίρεσις] τῇ ἀρετῇ καὶ μᾶλλον τὰ ἥθη κρίνειν τῶν πράξεων. *Eth.* 3. 1. 1111, b 5.

choice is:—that it is an effort to obtain something in our power accompanied by a preliminary debate as to the means of obtaining it. The third and final section of the subject is contained in the fourth chapter of the book, the subject of which is Wish—rational desire or appetency.

“Choice moves in the sphere of voluntary action, but it is not co-extensive with it, for it requires both more time and more reasoning than many acts which are voluntary. Acts done without thought and on the spur of the moment are voluntary, but the latter are not deliberate and the former are not intelligent. We see this by the example of children and the lower animals.²³ Nor can choice be identified, as some seem to have thought, either with the impulse of anger (spirit) or physical desire. Nor yet is it wish, although the two lie near together; we wish for what we can never attain, as for immortality, and for what is attainable indeed, but not by our own efforts, as that a particular athlete may win. A more important distinction with reference to the psychology of the subject is that wish is directed to ends and choice to means.²⁴ Is choice opinion? Probably no one would maintain it to be the same as opinion in general, but it is not even the same as any particular opinion, for our character is determined by our choice, and not by our opinions;²⁵ moreover we are praised for the object of

²³ τοῦ μὲν γὰρ ἑκουσίου καὶ παῖδες καὶ τᾶλλα ζῶα κοινωνεῖ, προαιρέσεως δ' οὐ, καὶ τὰ ἐξαίφνης ἐκούσια μὲν λέγομεν, κατὰ προαίρεσιν δ' οὐ. Eth. 3. 2. 1111, b 8.

²⁴ ἔτι δ' ἡ μὲν βούλησις τοῦ τέλους ἐστὶ μᾶλλον, ἡ δὲ προαίρεσις τῶν πρὸς τὸ τέλος. 1111, b 26.

²⁵ ὅλως μὲν οὖν δόξη ταῦτόν ἴσως οὐδὲ λέγει οὐδεὶς. ἀλλ' οὐδὲ τινί· τῷ γὰρ προαιρεῖσθαι τὰγαθὰ ἢ τὰ κακὰ ποιοῖ τίνες ἐσμεν, τῷ δὲ δοξάζειν οὐ. 1111, b 34.

our choice more than for the correctness of the means adopted to secure the object; whereas truth is the test of opinion." "On the whole," concludes Aristotle, "choice implies some previous deliberation, and is to that extent a rational process, and the word itself suggests preference."²⁶

From this description we may see, in a general way, that choice involves two things, an impulse towards an attainable end and a rational consideration of the means of arriving at it. In the next two chapters he deals, but in the inverse order, with these two elements; he describes, first, the deliberative process and next the appetitive one; but his account of the latter is so imperfect as to be unintelligible without the further explanation which he supplies in other works, and notably in the books on Mind and Animal Motion. A re-statement of the theory may therefore be useful.

It has already been pointed out that all orders of human activity are classified by Aristotle as theoretic, productive, and practical. The two last require for their exercise movement in place, and are thereby distinguished from theoretic activity which does not. The psychology of practical action, or conduct, leads therefore to the question, "Why do animals move in space?" The answer given in Aristotle's work on Life is that there are two coefficients of local movement in man, *Noûs* or intuition, qualified as practical intuition, and appetite.²⁷ Of these two coefficients the immediately

²⁶ ἀλλ' ἄρα γε τὸ προβεβουλευμένον; ἡ γὰρ προαίρεσις μετὰ λόγου καὶ διανοίας. ὑποσημαίνειν δ' ἔοικε καὶ τοῦνομα ὡς ὃν πρὸ ἐτέρων αἰρετόν. 1112, a 16.

²⁷ ἄμφω ἄρα ταῦτα κινητικὰ κατὰ τύπον, νοῦς καὶ ὄρεξις.

determining cause of motion is appetite, which is aroused and called into activity by an external object. But inasmuch as this external object must be presented to consciousness, either directly through the senses or indirectly by the imagination, before it can affect us, intelligence in some form or other is a joint cause in originating animal movement; appetite is the first and immediate cause, and intelligence in the form of practical intuition the second.²⁸ Aristotle states the matter succinctly in the sixth book of the *Ethics* when he says that "Man regarded as an efficient cause of movement in space may be looked at either as appetitive intuition or intuitional appetite."²⁹

CHAPTER 3.—To return to the subject of deliberation, —the intellectual part of the movements necessitated by conduct, "we have to examine what we can properly be said to deliberate about. We must assume an intelligent deliberator; such a man would not trouble himself about the motions of the solar system or think how to square the circle. Nor would he deliberate what the weather was going to be, for this is a variable quantity, nor how to find a hidden treasure, for that

De Anima iii. 10. 433, a 13. This νοῦς is of the kind called by Aristotle νοῦς ὁ ἐνεκά του λογιζόμενος καὶ ὁ πρακτικός, to distinguish it from that described in *Eth.* 6. 6.

²⁸ ἐν δὲ τι τὸ κινεῖν, τὸ ὁρεκτόν. De Anima iii. 10. 433, a 21. πρῶτον δὲ πάντων τὸ ὁρεκτόν (τοῦτο γὰρ κινεῖ οὐ κινούμενον τῷ νοηθῆναι ἢ φαντασθῆναι· ἀριθμῶ δὲ πλείω τὰ κινεῖντα. De Anima iii. 10. 433, b 11.

²⁹ διὸ ἡ ὁρεκτικὸς νοῦς ἡ προαίρεσις ἡ ὄρεξις διανοητική, καὶ ἡ τοιαύτη ἀρχὴ ἀνθρώπου. *Eth.* 6. 2. 1139, b 4.

is pure luck.³⁰ If, then, neither nature, necessity, nor chance are proper subjects of deliberation, he must deliberate about the things which fall within the range of human power, and can be effected or modified by man.³¹ And as a matter of fact, says Aristotle, 'Men deliberate about things which can be done by themselves,'³² — in other words they deliberate on conduct and art, the two subjects which are uncertain, indefinite and probable at the best, and where, consequently, in matters of importance, we seek advice.³³ The process of deliberation does not inquire what end is to be attained; it assumes an end given by desire and considers how it can be compassed. This process is described by Aristotle as bringing the inquiry down by a successive selection of means to the point where the inquirer, either by himself or his agents, can act effectively to the attainment of his proposed object. At that point deliberation ceases."

Suppose a man to have trouble with a tooth. He considers whether he shall go to a regular practitioner, or

³⁰ οὐδὲ περὶ τῶν ἄλλοτε ἄλλως, οἷον αὐχμῶν καὶ ὀμβρῶν. οὐδὲ περὶ τῶν ἀπὸ τύχης, οἷον θησαυροῦ εὐρέσεως. 1112, a 26.

³¹ The causes of any change whatever are reduced by Aristotle to four: Nature, Necessity, Chance and Man. αἰτίαι γὰρ δοκοῦσιν εἶναι φύσις καὶ ἀνάγκη καὶ τύχη, ἔτι δὲ νοῦς καὶ πᾶν τὸ δι' ἀνθρώπου. 1112, a 31.

³² βουλευόμεθα δὲ περὶ τῶν ἐφ' ἡμῖν καὶ πράκτων· ταῦτα δὲ καὶ ἔστι λοιπά. 1112, a 30.

³³ τὸ βουλευέσθαι δὲ ἐν τοῖς ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ, ἀδήλοις δὲ πῶς ἀποβήσεται, καὶ ἐν οἷς ἀδιόριστον. συμβούλους δὲ παραλαμβάνομεν εἰς τὰ μεγάλα, ἀπιστοῦντες ἡμῖν αὐτοῖς ὡς

try some infallible remedy. Not without hesitation he decides on the dentist, and makes an appointment accordingly. The surgeon suggests various ways of dealing with the case, for each of which something may be said. After weighing the alternatives, the patient decides that the most honourable course will be to have the tooth out. But shall he postpone the operation, or submit to it at once? This leads to a perplexing self debate, but at last he takes the chair and the instrument is adjusted. Then deliberation ceases and action begins. Aristotle calls this coming to the first cause, and says that it resembles the process of geometrical analysis.³⁴

Deliberation, being a process directed to a practical end, cannot go on indefinitely, it ceases "when the starting-point of action has been brought down to the agent himself or to some one on his behalf, or rather to the ruling part of him,"³⁵ that is to say to the part most immediately concerned with action, explained in the work on Life to be appetite correlating with its object, and this object always something attractive

οὐκ ἱκανοῖς διαγνῶναι. βουλευόμεθα δ' οὐ περὶ τῶν τέλων ἀλλὰ περὶ τῶν πρὸς τὰ τέλη. 1112, b 8.

³⁴ ὁ μὲν γὰρ βουλευόμενος ἔοικε ζητεῖν καὶ ἀναλύειν τὸν εἰρημένον τρόπον ὥσπερ διάγραμμα—καὶ τὸ ἔσχατον ἐν τῇ ἀναλύσει πρῶτον εἶναι ἐν τῇ γενέσει. 1112, b 20.

³⁵ παύεται γὰρ ἕκαστος ζητῶν πῶς πράξει, ὅταν εἰς αὐτὸν ἀναγάγῃ τὴν ἀρχήν, καὶ αὐτοῦ εἰς τὸ ἡγούμενον· τοῦτο γὰρ τὸ προαιρούμενον. 1113, a 5. This "ruling part" is what we mean by "will" in the distinctive sense of the word; the consciousness that we are ourselves capable of causing change, either in or outside ourselves; the recognition of ourselves as an ἀρχὴ κινήσεως. "τὸ ἡγούμενον" (only used in this place) is the nearest single Aristotelian equivalent to "will." See note 63.

or repulsive, inducing either pursuit or avoidance. Pleasure and pain are therefore the penultimate ends of conduct, and happiness is its ultimate end. Appetition is the moving cause which starts the human machine in the direction of things pleasurable and away from things painful, and deliberation is the rational process ascertaining the means by which a given end can be reached. This last process, consisting as it does in suggesting and rejecting successive means of action until we come to a point where we are ourselves able to act, might seem to be the same as choice; it differs, however, in that choice ascertains its own end with the aid of appetition, and deliberation does not ascertain ends but has them given.³⁶

Aristotle illustrates the whole process by a reference to the ancient political constitutions described by Homer in which the chieftains deliberated in council and then laid their conclusion before the people in the assembly for execution. The assembly could not, or at least did not, alter the decision of the council; the council could not give effect to its own policy without the aid or co-operation of the people. The chieftains therefore represent the consultative, and the people the appetitive side of choice, which Aristotle finally defines as "a deliberate appetition of things in our power,"³⁷ "for," he adds, "when we have arrived at a decision as the result of deliberation, we give effect to our desires in accordance with our decision." This definition

³⁶ βουλευτὸν δὲ καὶ προαιρετὸν τὸ αὐτό, πλὴν ἀφωρισμένον ἤδη τὸ προαιρετόν· τὸ γὰρ ἐκ τῆς βουλῆς κριθεὶν προαιρετόν ἐστιν. 1113, a 2.

³⁷ ἡ προαίρεσις ἂν εἴη βουλευτικὴ ὄρεξις τῶν ἐφ' ἡμῖν· ἐκ τοῦ βουλευέσασθαι γὰρ κρίναντες ὀρεγόμεθα κατὰ τὴν βούλευσιν. 1113, a 10.

assumes it to be already known what appetite is; the deliberate process has been explained, not so the appetitive one. But the latter is not the least, but the most important part; the chieftains would have discussed policy to little purpose unless they had had an army at their back. It is one of the many anomalies of the Ethics that it gives no adequate account of appetite. For anything which appears to the contrary, the only appetitive impulse operative in moral choice is the purely rational one of wish; Aristotle does not discuss the irrational appetitions which are responsible for so large a part of human conduct.

CHAPTER 4.—In the fourth chapter of the book we have a short account of wish (*βούλησις*). What is wish? We have already been told two things respecting it; that it is not the same thing as moral choice, and that it is directed to ends.³⁸ If we turn to the book on animal motion we find wish classed, together with spirit (*θυμός*) and physical desire (*ἐπιθυμία*), as a constituent of appetency (*ὄρεξις*),³⁹ and from the *De Anima* we learn that of these three constituents wish belongs to the deliberative and rational part of the mind, and the other two to the irrational part.⁴⁰ Aristotle introduces what he has to say here⁴¹ on the subject of wish by noticing two views held as to its object; "there are some," he

³⁸ ἀλλὰ μὴν οὐδὲ βούλησις γε [ἡ προαίρεσις] 1111, b 19; ἔτι δ' ἡ μὲν βούλησις τοῦ τέλους ἐστὶ μάλλον, ἡ δὲ προαίρεσις τῶν πρὸς τὸ τέλος. 1111, b 26.

³⁹ *De Motu Animal.* 6. 700, b 22.

⁴⁰ ἔν τε τῇ λογιστικῇ γὰρ ἡ βούλησις γίνεται, καὶ ἐν τῇ ἀλόγῳ ἡ ἐπιθυμία καὶ ὁ θυμός. *De Anima* iii. 9. 432, b 5.

⁴¹ In Chapter IV. 1113, a 15.

tells us, "who consider that we wish for 'the good,' and others who think that we wish for what appears to be such, 'the phenomenal or apparent good.' Now the result of holding the first opinion must be, that those who wish for the wrong thing do not wish at all; and the result of holding the second is, that there is no natural object of wish but that each man is in this respect a law to himself. But if, he adds, neither of these alternatives is satisfactory, had we not better say that, simply and truly, the object of wish is 'the good,' but that to each one it is what appears good to him, 'the phenomenal good'?"⁴²

The expression "simply and truly good" does not refer to an absolute standard—a metaphysical or Platonic ideal. We are in the region of conduct, that is, of things variable and contingent, and the only good in that sphere is relative. "Truly good" means, as Aristotle explains, "good in the opinion of the prudent or good man";⁴³ "apparent good" is what appears such to the imprudent or bad man. Just as in matters of dietetics or sensation we take the man in good health as the standard of what is wholesome, cold, hot, bitter, sweet, so in conduct, in determining what is proper to wish for, we have to be guided by a standard to be ascertained by referring to the wishes of the good or prudent man.⁴⁴ In this chapter as in

⁴² εἰ δὲ ταῦτα μὴ ἀρέσκει, ἄρα φατέον ἀπλῶς μὲν καὶ κατ' ἀλήθειαν βουλευτὸν εἶναι τἀγαθόν, ἐκάστῳ δὲ τὸ φαινόμενον. 1113, a 22.

⁴³ ὁ σπουδαῖος γὰρ ἕκαστα κρίνει ὁρθῶς, καὶ ἐν ἐκάστοις τἀληθὲς αὐτῷ φαίνεται. 1113, a 29. δοκεῖ δ' ἐν ἅπασιν τοῖς τοιούτοις [γλύκεσι, θερμοῖς εὐεκτικοῖς] εἶναι τὸ φαινόμενον τῷ σπουδαίῳ. Eth. 10. 5. 1176, a 15.

⁴⁴ τῷ μὲν οὖν σπουδαίῳ τὸ κατ' ἀλήθειαν εἶναι, τῷ

many other places, "good" and "prudent" are terms referring to the same person looked at under slightly different aspects; when his general moral character is being considered, the representative of the best type in any society is called "good";⁴⁵ when his practical intelligence is in question, as when he is called upon to advise what is too much or too little, he is called prudent; in either case his judgment is conditioned by circumstances never exactly the same, and "good as appears to him" is a relative, phenomenal good. Still, his opinion is of value as correcting individual bias; every one, according to his habit and disposition, has his own views of what is right; the "good" man is more able than common men to see what should be done in given circumstances, and is consequently to be accepted as a rule and measure of it in those circumstances.⁴⁶ The errors of ordinary people, Aristotle reminds us, arise from the disturbing influence of pleasure which makes things appear good when they are not.⁴⁷ In the fifth chapter of Book X. in discussing pleasure Aristotle repeats the views here expressed. "A healthy man and a man in a fever have different feelings of what is hot, and a man who is ill and one who is well have different tastes of what is sweet—in all these cases the standard is given by

δὲ φαύλῳ τὸ τυχόν, ὥσπερ καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν σωμάτων τοῖς μὲν εὖ διακειμένοις ὑγιεινὰ ἐστὶ τὰ κατ' ἀλήθειαν τοιαῦτα ὄντα. 1113, a 25.

⁴⁵ τῷ ἀρετὴν ἔχειν σπουδαῖος λέγεται. Kat. viii. 1068.

⁴⁶ διαφέρει πλείστον ἴσως ὁ σπουδαῖος τῷ τάληθές ἐν ἐκάστοις ὁρᾶν, ὥσπερ κᾶνων καὶ μέτρον αὐτῶν ὢν. 1113, a 32.

⁴⁷ ἐν τοῖς πολλοῖς δὲ ἡ ἀπάτη διὰ τὴν ἡδόνην ἔοικε γίνεσθαι οὐ γὰρ οὕσα ἀγαθὸν φαίνεται. 1113, a 33.

what appears to 'the good' (*i.e.* to the normally healthy) man; the good man, consequently, in so far as he is good, is the measure of conduct, and pleasure is that which he considers to be such.⁴⁸

Aristotle's use of the word "measure" in the two passages above referred to make it probable that he is thinking of the well-known saying of Protagoras that "Man is the measure of all things," or, as it is more accurately expressed, "As things appear to me, so they are to me, and as they appear to you, so they are to you."⁴⁹

From the way in which Aristotle criticises this dictum in his *Metaphysics*, it appears that he understood Protagoras to mean that each person's assertion respecting the external world is true of that world; that things *are* as every one supposes them to be.⁵⁰ If Protagoras held such a view, it would follow that contradictory propositions respecting the same thing might be true at the same time, and in this case (as Aristotle points out) the difference between truth and error would disappear and reasoning would become im-

⁴⁸ οὐ γὰρ τὰ αὐτὰ δοκεῖ τῷ πυρέττοντι καὶ τῷ ὑγιαίνοντι, οὐδὲ θερμὸν εἶναι τῷ ἀσθενεῖ καὶ τῷ εὐεκτικῷ—δοκεῖ δ' ἐν ἅπασιν τοῦς τοιοῦτοις εἶναι τὸ φαινόμενον τῷ σπουδαίῳ· εἰ δὲ τοῦτο καλῶς λέγεται, καθάπερ δοκεῖ, καὶ ἔστιν ἐκάστου μέτρον ἡ ἀρετὴ καὶ ἀγαθός, ἥ τοιοῦτος. 1176, a 13.

⁴⁹ οὐκοῦν οὕτω πως λέγει [Πρωταγόρας] ὥς οἷα μὲν ἕκαστα ἔμοι φαίνεται τοιαῦτα μὲν ἔστιν ἐμοὶ, οἷα δὲ σοί, τοιαῦτα δὲ αὖ σοί. Plato, *Theæt.* 152 A.

⁵⁰ εἴτε γὰρ τὰ δοκοῦντα πάντα ἐστὶν ἀληθῆ καὶ τὰ φαίνομενα, ἀνάγκη πάντα ἅμα ἀληθῆ καὶ φευδῆ εἶναι. πολλοὶ γὰρ τὰναντία ὑπολαμβάνουσιν ἀλλήλοις, καὶ τοὺς μὴ ταῦτα δοξάζοντας ἑαυτοῖς διεψεῦσθαι νομίζουσιν· ὥστ' ἀνάγκη τὸ αὐτὸ εἶναι τε καὶ μὴ εἶναι. *Met.* iii. 5. 1009, a 7.

possible. But if Protagoras merely meant to assert the relativity of knowledge, which not every one even now appears unreservedly to accept,⁵¹—that we know nothing of the world outside us except through our own minds, and that consequently every statement we make about things is necessarily only a statement about things as we think of them, and is therefore always relative and never absolute; ⁵²—if he meant this, he was only maintaining what Aristotle himself together with many other people at the present time believe. “Our knowledge of things,” says Aristotle in the *De Anima*, “is either a knowledge of things in themselves, or of things as presented to us in the shape either of sensible impressions or of concepts. It cannot be a knowledge of the things themselves, for the stone which I see is not in my head; it must therefore be a knowledge of the image

⁵¹ I extract from Mr. Stewart’s note to this chapter in his valuable commentary on the *Ethics* the following passages:—

“In all creatures there is a *θεῖόν τι* which directs their efforts towards that which is naturally good. This instinctive tendency to conform to the objective law of the environment is often thwarted by influences of subjective origin; but the continuance of life proves it to be the strongest principle—*τὸ κράτιστον*. ‘It rules the world,’ because, after all, it ‘has might as it has right.’” Stewart, “Notes on the Nichomachæan *Ethics*,” i. 270.

“Right and wrong are ‘in things,’ not in our feelings,” p. 271.

“There is an objective good, a *φύσει βουλευτόν*, or *ἀγαθόν*, which *ἀρετή*, man’s true *φύσις* or perfection, discloses,” p. 271.

⁵² See Grote’s “Plato,” ii. p. 327 sqq., where the subject is clearly and fully discussed.

of the stone, and consequently in one sense all existence is subjective." 53

We may take it, therefore, that Aristotle, speaking in the fourth chapter of this book of the true object of wish, meant nothing but "an object conceived by us as

53 ἡ ψυχὴ τὰ ὄντα πως ἐστὶ πάντα · ἡ γὰρ αἰσθητὰ τὰ ὄντα ἢ νοητά, ἔστι δ' ἡ ἐπιστήμη μὲν τὰ ἐπιστητά πως, ἡ δ' αἰσθησις τὰ αἰσθητά · πῶς δὲ τοῦτο, δεῖ ζητεῖν. τέμνεται οὖν ἡ ἐπιστήμη καὶ ἡ αἰσθησις εἰς τὰ πράγματα, ἡ μὲν δυνάμει εἰς τὰ δυνάμει, ἡ δ' ἐντελεχεία εἰς τὰ ἐντελεχεία · τῆς δὲ ψυχῆς τὸ αἰσθητικὸν καὶ τὸ ἐπιστημονικὸν δυνάμει ταυτὸν ἐστὶ, τὸ μὲν ἐπιστητὸν τὸ δὲ αἰσθητὸν. ἀνάγκη δ' ἢ αὐτὰ ἢ τὰ εἶδη εἶναι · αὐτὰ μὲν γὰρ δὴ οὐ · οὐ γὰρ ὁ λίθος ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ, ἀλλὰ τὸ εἶδος · ὥστ' ἡ ψυχὴ ὥσπερ ἡ χεὶρ ἐστίν · καὶ γὰρ ἡ χεὶρ ὄργανόν ἐστιν ὀργάνων, καὶ ὁ νοῦς εἶδος εἶδων. De Anima iii. 8. 431, b 21 ; 26.

In Plato's Charmides the question is raised whether there can be any knowledge which is not relative; knowledge (it is suggested) must be knowledge of something, it cannot be its own object; absolute knowledge is impossible; ἀλλ' ἐπιστήμην, ὡς ἔοικε, φαμέν τινα εἶναι τοιαύτην, ἣτις μαθήματος μὲν οὐδενός ἐστιν ἐπιστήμη, αὐτῆς δὲ καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἐπιστήμων ἐπιστήμη. Φαμέν γάρ. Οὐκοῦν ἄτοπον, εἰ ἄρα καὶ ἔστιν; After many examples have been given of knowledge necessarily involving, or at least seeming to involve a subject, as well as an external object, such as hearing, sight, motion, the discussion is wound up with the usual Sokratic doubt: μεγάλου δὴ τινος, ὦ φίλε, ἀνδρὸς δεῖ, ὅστις τοῦτο κατὰ πάντων ἱκανῶς διαιρήσεται, πότερον οὐδὲν τῶν ὄντων τὴν αὐτοῦ δύναμιν αὐτὸ πρὸς ἑαυτὸ πέφυκεν ἔχειν, ἀλλὰ πρὸς ἄλλο, ἢ τὰ μὲν, τὰ δ' οὐ · καὶ εἰ ἔστιν αὖ ἅτινα αὐτὰ πρὸς ἑαυτὰ ἔχει, ἅρ' ἐν τούτοις ἐστὶν ἐπιστήμη, ἣν δὴ ἡμεῖς σωφροσύνην φαμέν εἶναι. ἐγὼ μὲν οὐ πιστεύω ἐμμαντῶ ἱκανὸς εἶναι ταῦτα διελέσθαι. Plato, Charm. 168 A. ; 169 A.

desirable." The difficulty to which he alludes, that if this should be true, there would be no security that different people using the same word are thinking of the same thing, is not a real difficulty in practice, either in matters of sensible perception or of conduct. In matters of sensible perception many independent tests and corrections can be applied to the personal or subjective standard. We do not know whether the colour which we agree to call red produces the same impression on any two minds; it is quite likely that it does not. But if a lamp which we agree to call red be placed on a railway and engine-drivers are told to stop when they see it, and ninety-nine out of one hundred do stop, we conclude from their actions that they agree as to the name of the colour although its qualities may appear different to each of them. The hundredth man, however, whose impression varies so widely from that of the others that he runs past the signal, is called "colour blind" and considered unfit to be an engine-driver.

So with regard to conduct. In the case of objects of desire we cannot know whether they are "in themselves" the same,—in Aristotle's language, whether they are "natural objects of desire" or not; all we know is that men have been taught by the various corrections that personal experience and social judgments apply to act, on the whole, in the same way with regard to them, and so long as they do so it matters not whether they are "real" or "apparent" objects of desire.⁵⁴

CHAPTER 5.—In the last chapter of the section devoted to moral choice, Aristotle turns to the question of moral responsibility. "Good conduct as well as bad is in our own power; whenever we can do

54 διοίσει δ' οὐδέν· ἔσται γὰρ τὸ βουλευτὸν φαινόμενον.

we can forbear; if we can say 'Nay,' we can say 'Yea.'"⁵⁵ This is the fundamental proposition on the truth of which the whole practical value of the Ethics turns. Aristotle analyses motive and traces conduct to the springs from which it flows, partly for the sake of the analysis, but chiefly in order that statesmen may know how to act when they undertake the difficult but necessary task of public education, and also in order that legislation may be directed to the punishment of wickedness and vice and the maintenance of public order and virtue. But education would be impossible if those who are to be taught could truly say "We are unable to pay attention; it is not our fault, we are made so";⁵⁶ and there could be no settled administration of justice if the plea of uncontrollable impulse were to be freely admitted. Such excuses are common enough, and the ground of them was as familiar to Aristotle and his contemporaries as to us. The puzzle of predestination is set forth quite clearly in Homer, and all readers of Æschylus knew what it was for a man to put on the "yoke-strap of necessity." But Aristotle does not trouble himself with these metaphysical niceties. "If," he says, "we can assign no other cause for our actions except ourselves, then those actions of which we are the cause are within our power."⁵⁷ That this is so is proved both

55 ἐφ' ἡμῖν δὴ καὶ ἡ ἀρετή, ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ ἡ κακία. ἐν οἷς γὰρ ἐφ' ἡμῖν τὸ πράττειν, καὶ τὸ μὴ πράττειν, καὶ ἐν οἷς τὸ μὴ, καὶ τὸ ναί. 1113, b 6.

56 ἀλλ' ἴσως τοιοῦτός ἐστιν ὥστε μὴ ἐπιμεληθῆναι. 1114, a 3.

57 εἰ μὴ ἔχομεν εἰς ἄλλας ἀρχὰς ἀναγαγεῖν παρὰ τὰς ἐν ἡμῖν, ὧν καὶ αἱ ἀρχαὶ ἐν ἡμῖν, καὶ αὐτὰ ἐφ' ἡμῖν καὶ ἐκούσια. 1113, b 19.

by our practice in private life and by the action of law makers; wrong-doers are punished unless they can show that they acted under physical restraint, or through some ignorance for which they are not responsible." Ignorance which is a man's own fault, like the ignorance of drunkenness, is no excuse—no one obliged him to get drunk; ignorance which is the result of want of ordinary care and attention is no excuse: a man who throws a bottle out of a carriage window and kills some one on the railroad deserves to be punished for manslaughter. If he says, "I am sorry, but I am naturally careless," Aristotle replies, "Careless habits are the consequence of careless acts and perhaps of an irregular life, and you are responsible for both. In the same way, if you live too freely and neglect the advice of your doctor, you will become ill by your own act.⁵⁸ But you must remember that it does not follow that you can get well by your own act; if you let yourself go you may not be able to retrace your steps, any more than if you throw a stone you can recall it."

"The analogy between mental and bodily habits extends to their corresponding defects. We do not reproach those who are maimed or deformed by accident, disease, or congenital malformation, but if the defect can be traced to neglect of exercise or to their own mode of life, they are justly reproached. Alike, therefore, on the ground of ethical theory, of practical convenience, and of the analogies supplied by Nature, we are bound to maintain that man is as much the parent of his character as of his children.⁵⁹ It is useless to talk of wish and to say with Sokrates that no one wishes to

⁵⁸ καὶ εἰ οὕτως ἔτυχεν, ἐκὼν νοσεῖ, ἀκρατῶς βιοτεύων καὶ ἀπειθῶν τοῖς ἰατροῖς. 1114, a 15.

⁵⁹ 1113, b 18.

be dishonest; the point is not what you wish but what you will, and if you will act dishonestly it is the same as if you wished to be dishonest.”⁶⁰

“One point remains to be considered. Conduct is directed to ends, and its value is determined thereby. These ends are not external to the thinker but subjective, something imagined; and inasmuch as imagination depends on sensation and is caused by it, it may be said that our imaginative concepts of the ends of conduct are a matter of physical organisation for which we are no more responsible than for our senses, and if so, then that we are not responsible for the essential part of conduct, namely its end and object. Aristotle replies that habits are just as much⁶¹ a matter of organisation as imagination is, and that if, notwithstanding, we are responsible for our habits (which he assumes himself to have proved), we are responsible in the same degree and kind for our imagination. On any other view, he says, there would be no moral responsibility for misconduct; every one might say that he had acted for the best, but had merely mistaken the end, and that his concept of ends being due to his organisation, he is no more responsible for it than for the correctness of his vision.⁶¹ Such an apologist might add that the

⁶⁰ ἔτι δ' ἄλογον τὸν ἀδικοῦντα μὴ βούλεσθαι ἄδικον εἶναι ἢ τὸν ἀκολασταίνοντα ἀκόλαστον. 1114, a 11.

⁶¹ εἰ δέ τις λέγοι ὅτι πάντες ἐφίενται τοῦ φαινομένου ἀγαθοῦ, τῆς δὲ φαντασίας οὐ κύριοι, ἀλλ' ὅποῖος ποθ' ἕκαστός ἐστι, τοιοῦτο καὶ τὸ τέλος φαίνεται αὐτῷ· εἰ μὲν οὖν ἕκαστος ἑαυτῷ τῆς ἕξεως ἐστὶ πῶς αἴτιος, καὶ τῆς φαντασίας ἐστὶ πῶς αὐτὸς αἴτιος· εἰ δὲ μὴ, οὐθὲς αὐτῷ αἴτιος τοῦ κακοποιεῖν, ἀλλὰ δι' ἄγνοίαν τοῦ τέλους ταῦτα πράττει. 1113, a 31.

Imagination (φαντασία) is the power by which impressions of sense are reproduced in the mind and there

possession of this gift of imagining what one ought to do is moral beauty and as much due to nature as physical beauty, with which it is, in fact, closely allied. But if this reasoning be admitted, it will follow, says Aristotle, that virtue is as little voluntary as vice, for both depend on our conception of the end. But if good conduct be voluntary—which it is, for we are ourselves co-operating causes in the formation of our character, and it is our character which fixes the end of our conduct—bad conduct must be voluntary too, for the same reasoning applies to both.”⁶²

indirectly contemplated. The argument of those who maintain that we are not responsible for what we imagine to be the ends of conduct amounts to this: our eyes enable us to see where we are going, and our imagination enables us to see where we are going in matters of conduct, and one is as much a matter of physical organisation as the other, and equally beyond our control. If we have bad eyes we cannot find our way, and if we have a defective imagination we cannot determine what we should do—*ἡ δὲ τοῦ τέλους ἔφεσις οὐκ αὐθαίρετος, ἀλλὰ φῦναι δεῖ ὥσπερ ὄψιν ἔχοντα*. 1114. b 6.—Aristotle replies that a man is as much responsible for his imagination as for his habits—*εἰ μὲν οὖν ἕκαστος ἑαυτῷ τῆς ἕξεως ἐστὶ πῶς αἴτιος, καὶ τῆς φαντασίας ἔσται πῶς αὐτὸς αἴτιος*, 1114, b 1—and that the argument, if valid, would prove good conduct to be involuntary.

⁶² *εἰ οὖν, ὥσπερ λέγεται, ἐκούσιοί εἰσιν αἱ ἀρεταί (καὶ γὰρ τῶν ἕξεων συναίτιοί πῶς αὐτοὶ ἐσμεν, καὶ τῷ ποιοῖ τινες εἶναι τὸ τέλος τοιόνδε τιθέμεθα), καὶ αἱ κακίαι ἐκούσιοι ἂν εἶεν ὁμοίως γὰρ*. 1114, b 21.

REMARKS

IN the five chapters just summarised Aristotle opens out some of the most perplexing problems of moral philosophy,—those connected with will, choice, and responsibility. He treats all these in a common-sense way, content to reach conclusions which will work in practice and commend themselves to the judgment of those who do not think it necessary to push their beliefs to their logical consequences. His reasoning is, however, frequently technical, and it assumes that his hearers have a general acquaintance with his psychology, and especially with that part of it which deals with animal movement. The important chapter on voluntary action is made more difficult to follow than it otherwise would be, by reason of the fact that there is not in the *Ethics*, or elsewhere in the writings admitted to be his, any word exactly equivalent to our word “will,” in the sense of “the consciousness of our ability to initiate a change either in our own minds or in things around us.” He has a word (*βούλησις*) which means “wish,” but he has no recognised word which means “will” as distinguished from wish.⁶³ The abstract term “the

⁶³ τὸ ἡγούμενον seems to be such a word, but it is only used in 1113, a 6. See note 34. τὸ θέλημα is used in *De Plantis* (815, b 20), but the authenticity of this treatise is doubtful.

voluntary" is applicable only "where the cause of motion is in the agent who knows the circumstances material to his action.⁶⁴ That definition includes the case of a man who, being a free agent, does what he wishes to do, but it excludes the case of a free agent doing something not contemplated by him at the time of action. Aristotle has no word to express the state of consciousness of a person acting under such circumstances, who would, nevertheless, certainly be said to "will." If a man shoots at a rabbit and hits him, Aristotle calls him a voluntary agent; but if he shoots at a rabbit and hits a keeper, Aristotle will not allow him to be a voluntary agent—*ἐκὼν μὲν οὐ πέπραχεν ὁ γε μὴ ἤδει*,⁶⁵ nor will he allow him to be called either an involuntary or a non-voluntary agent, unless and until he afterwards finds out what he has done, in which event he is an involuntary agent if he is sorry, and a non-voluntary agent if he is not; yet some word is wanted to express the state of mind of the sportsman when he pulled the trigger. It is rather remarkable that Aristotle, usually so prolific in "coining words for the sake of clearness," should not have earmarked a term to distinguish will from wish, especially as there was a word ready to his hand if he had thought of availing himself of it.⁶⁶

With the question of the freedom of the will, as a practical question, Aristotle does not concern himself. He assumes (with the rest of the world) man to be the uncontrolled cause of his own actions, bodily and mental. Necessity, nature, and even chance are considered by him as also capable of initiating change,

⁶⁴ 1111, a 22.

⁶⁵ 1110, b 20.

⁶⁶ τὸ βέλημα καὶ τὸ τοῦ ἡμετέρου δι' θελήματος τέλος πρὸς τὴν αἴσθησιν ἀποστρέφεται. De Plantis 815, b 20.

but they are agents who act independently of man ; our free power is not taken away by their action, although it may be limited or neutralised by it. The Peripatetics, and, with the exception of the Stoics, the Greek Schools do not seem to have occupied themselves with the problem of free will, which was not raised as a serious difficulty until the theological controversies of the fifth century on predestination gave prominence to it. It took another shape many centuries later when the advance of the physical sciences had extended and developed the theory of causation, and when our actions came to be regarded as the necessary consequence of antecedents from which, if completely known, it was assumed that our conduct could be unerringly inferred. Aristotle admits nature as a partner or joint cause with man in the evolution of conduct,⁶⁷ but he does not infer that, even in theory, we are thereby deprived of any part of our free initiation. He holds a firm hand over such excuses as, "I could not help it, it is my nature ;" "I am very sorry, but I was blinded by passion : " "I was drunk." He answers, "No one obliged you to get drunk or to get in a passion ; if it is your character to do wrong, it is your fault for having such a character ; you have been living a loose life and not attending to your doctor."

Madness is, of course, an excuse, but we may judge that Aristotle would have looked askance on the plea of monomania. His psychology led him to consider the mind as a whole, and he would have doubted whether in fact one part of that whole can be diseased when the remainder is sound ; he would have been likely to deal with the plea of uncontrollable criminal impulse by asking, with a modern judge, whether the

⁶⁷ 1112, a 32.

impulse would have proved uncontrollable if a policeman had been looking on.

The freedom of the agent assumed, the next question is what determines him to act at all, or to act in one way rather than in another? This is the problem of moral choice, but as the *Ethics* is not a self-contained work we have to go outside it in order to find the answer. All conduct involves the essential element of movement in space. Speculative activity, and even some forms of Art, are possible and are best carried on without locomotion. An oyster in the fixed solitude of its shell might conceivably occupy itself meditating on "things as they are," might compose poetry or music, and, given vocal organs, recite or sing, without moving from its native rock, but it could not possibly conduct itself.

An accurate analysis of conduct involves, therefore, an answer to the question, "How does an animal move itself in space?" In the *Ethics* Aristotle states that it does,⁶⁸ but he does not explain how, although the *modus operandi* is very relevant to his theory of choice. We have to turn to the treatise on animal motion and to the book on Life for an explanation of the process, without which the account of moral choice is hardly intelligible.

In the former of these works the question is stated in these terms: "How does the vital principle (*ψυχή*) move the body, and what is the cause of animal motion?"⁶⁹

⁶⁸ καὶ τὸ ἐκούσιον δὴ καὶ τὸ ἀκούσιον, ὅτε πράττει λεκτέον. πράττει δὲ ἐκὼν· καὶ γὰρ ἡ ἀρχὴ τοῦ κινεῖν τὰ ὀργανικὰ μέρη ἐν ταῖς τοιαύταις πράξεσιν ἐν αὐτῷ ἐστίν. 1110, a 14.

⁶⁹ πῶς ἡ ψυχὴ κινεῖ τὸ σῶμα, καὶ τίς ἀρχὴ τῆς τοῦ ζῶου κινήσεως. De Motu Animal. 6. 700, b 10.

Now the cause of every kind of animal motion, whether in space or otherwise, is to be found in the animal itself. Life implies self motion; it is one of the chief distinctions between animate and inanimate bodies, that whilst the latter can only be moved from without, the former can be moved from within. But the movement of an animated body in space must be definite and directed to some end or purpose.⁷⁰ Such end is either an external object towards which animals are moved by an irrational impulse directing them to that which seems to them good, or it is an object which, appearing hurtful, repels them from it. In the case of man this impulse—to which Aristotle gives the general name of appetite (ὄρεξις)—is also present,⁷¹ and is controllable, although not always controlled by practical reason. There is, between the self-originating impulse, common to all animals, and its object a bond of connection, not very clearly stated by Aristotle and perhaps not clearly conceived by him, which we may represent by the metaphor of attractive force. The object of desire, as being the end of movement, is to be regarded, in accordance with Aristotle's general doctrine of causation, as its final cause.

Appetition in man is a more complex impulse than

⁷⁰ πάντα γὰρ τὰ ζῷα καὶ κινεῖ καὶ κινεῖται [κατὰ τόπον] ἕνεκά τινος, ὥστε τοῦτ' ἔστιν αὐτοῖς πάσης τῆς κινήσεως πέρας, τὸ οὐ ἕνεκα. De Motu Animal. 700, b 15.

⁷¹ Why the irrational impulse of appetite, which is operative in the lower animals and in children, as well as in adult mankind, should point to what the creature takes to be good, Aristotle explains no further than by referring us to the intelligent and benevolent action of nature; in reasoning man practical intelligence assists and directs physical desire.

in animals of lower organisation. It includes, in addition to the wholly irrational impulse of the lowest organised animals and to the irrational desire of those higher in the scale, a rational form of appetite called wish (*βούλησις*).⁷²

The object of wish, whether positive as of something desired or negative as of something avoided, may be apprehended by man in two ways—it may be directly presented to him by his senses or represented to him by his imagination; but however apprehended, it is the final cause of his movement and will ultimately be found to be something pleasurable or painful, or, which comes to the same thing, conceived so to be.⁷³ All forms of appetite, both the irrational propension, the half rational desire and the wholly rational wish, may be ultimately reduced to two, distinguished by Aristotle, both in the *Ethics* and elsewhere, as practical reason (*νοῦς*) and appetite (*ὄρεξις*);⁷⁴ imagination and sensible perception are included in *Νοῦς*; spirit, desire and wish are included in appetite. The cause of conduct, so far as Man is concerned, is therefore (1) an object presented by the senses as something to be pursued or avoided, or (2) an object represented by the imagination as fit to be pursued or avoided, and in each case conceived as desirable or the reverse, as to the mode of attaining or avoiding which,

⁷² βούλησις δὲ καὶ θυμὸς καὶ ἐπιθυμία πάντα ὄρεξις, ἥ δὲ προαίρεσις κοινὸν διανοίας καὶ ὀρέξεως. *De Motu Animal.* 700, b 22.

⁷³ δεῖ δὲ τιθέναι καὶ τὸ φαινόμενον ἀγαθὸν ἀγαθοῦ χώραν ἔλιν, καὶ τὸ ἡδύ· φαινόμενον γάρ ἐστιν ἀγαθόν. *De motu animal.* 700, b 28. ἄρα φατέον ἀπλῶς μὲν καὶ κατ' ἀλήθειαν βουλευτὸν εἶναι τἀγαθόν, ἐκάστω δὲ τὸ φαινόμενον; *Eth.* 3. 4. 1113, a 23.

⁷⁴ 1139, b 4; *De Motu Animal.* 700, b 18.

practical reason makes suggestions. Tracing the various steps by which conduct is produced, we find them to be: an external object causing a mental state of perception or imagination; feelings of desire or dislike aroused by the object perceived or imagined; emotions of pleasure or pain consequential on the feelings experienced; and, finally, motion of the body or limbs. Had Aristotle been acquainted with the nervous system, his explanation would probably have differed little from that given by modern physiologists. Speculative intellect has nothing to do with this process; it has nothing to say on the point whether this object is fit to be obtained or that fit to be avoided; even were it to consider such things it would refrain from pronouncing; it is not its business.⁷⁵

This, then, is moral choice, the appetition of some object within our power which we wish to possess, or the avoidance of some object within our power which we wish to avoid, under the guidance and direction of practical calculative reason.

The following illustration may serve to illustrate the steps which lead to moral conduct. I am walking in the country, and I am made aware by my senses of various external objects—a thunder shower, and, at different distances, a tree, a shed, and a house. As the result of previous experience I wish to take shelter: this is the orectic or appetitive side of my action. I proceed to deliberate whether I shall go 50 yards to the tree, 100 yards to the shed or 500 yards to the house: this is a question

⁷⁵ ὁ μὲν γὰρ θεωρητικὸς [νοῦς] οὐθὲν νοεῖ πρακτόν, οὐδὲ λέγει περὶ φευκτοῦ καὶ διωκτοῦ οὐθεν—ἀλλ' οὐδ' ὅταν θεωρῇ τι τοιοῦτον, ἤδη κελεύει φεύγειν ἢ διώκειν. De Anima iii. 9. 432, b 27.

of practical intelligence involving several *pros* and *cons*. As the result of deliberation I arrive at myself as the cause of motion, and seeing no other way of giving effect to my intention, I determine to run, attracted by the shelter which seems most desirable. This is moral choice, which Aristotle says has a great deal to do with good conduct and is a greater test of my disposition than the act of taking shelter itself.⁷⁶ But then the act itself requires to be judged. I may leave the shelter before it has ceased raining and get wet, or I may outstay the shower and be late for dinner. I ought to remain just the right time—the exact quantitative difference between precipitation and delay, this difference being that which makes my action good. Upon whether I stay the right time will depend the question whether I shall be praised or blamed, and this again will depend on the kind of people I am living with. If I am in a society of hardy men living an outdoor life, accustomed to exposure and caring for punctuality, they will blame me for being late with no better excuse than the desire to avoid a wetting; but with people of different habits, I should be praised for taking every precaution to avoid cold.

The process of choice is therefore one thing, and the value of the act done in pursuance of it another thing. The moral goodness or badness of what is done on the dictation of choice is not determined by choice itself or by its intellectual constituent, practical reason; it is fixed by custom, by the approval or disapproval of the society in which the agent lives. Aristotle's ethical imperative is therefore, "Do as others would wish you to do"; Kant's is, "Do as you would wish others to do." In the long run there is, perhaps, not much difference, but the Aristotelian rule seems the more

social way of putting it, and more free from the imputation of the heresy of making oneself the measure of things.

From the nature of the case, responsibility for our actions cannot be directly proved. It is a case of circumstantial evidence, and the weight of the evidence depends chiefly on the fact that inferences from many independent sources all point in the same direction. Aristotle groups the arguments in the following manner:—

1. General consensus of opinion that we are responsible agents, as shown by the universal practice of rewards and punishments. All private exhortation, all positive law, proceeds on the assumption that those to whom it is addressed are able to obey; when they are physically unable to obey, or when their disobedience can be traced to a cause over which they have no control, they are excused, otherwise not. Where obedience is known to be impossible, no orders are ever given, but that is the solitary exception to the otherwise invariable practice of advising, encouraging, directing people to a certain course of action. We cannot suppose mankind to be universally wrong in the assumption on which this practice of theirs is founded.

2. The reasons given by those who plead irresponsibility are insufficient for the purpose. They say, "We did not make ourselves; there is, as you admit, such a thing as natural virtue, from which it follows that there is such a thing as natural vice. We are naturally vicious." Aristotle replies, "Do you deny that you are voluntary agents? if not, you must admit that, subject to the exceptions I have mentioned, the single acts which go to make up moral habits are within your power, and if so you are responsible for the habits. If you put it that you pursue the ends represented by your imagination and that you cannot command your imagination, I must

remind you that you can command your imagination as much, and for the same reasons, as you can command your habits. If you are epileptic or insane, that is another thing, but I can hear no arguments founded on a peculiar mental disposition."

It will be noticed that the question of determinism, of the necessary sequence of actions from physical causes is clearly raised. Aristotle answers it by saying, "I do not see the necessity."⁷⁷

3. The argument of irresponsibility proves too much. It is put forward to excuse misconduct, but if there is anything in it, it would prevent our praising good conduct. For it would not be reasonable to allow a man to say, "I am responsible when I do right, and irresponsible when I do wrong." The same rule must apply both to virtue and vice.

At this point Aristotle concludes the formal part of his theory of conduct. He has defined good conduct as a habit—the result of repeated acts; the acts constituting it must be freely and deliberately chosen with reference

⁷⁷ Although Aristotle says definitely that we are free to do as we like, he does not say explicitly that our likings are within our power, and he had probably not considered this particular point. His language in the *De Anima* and in the *De Motu Animalium* implies, however, that the ultimate efficient cause of action, namely appetency, is a purely physical propension over which we have no control. It was not necessary for him in the *Ethics* to consider this question, for social judgments, and in particular legal judgments, are bound to proceed on the assumption that (subject to the exceptions noted by Aristotle) we are free agents.

to an end suggested by our desires, but our choice is limited in two directions: we must not choose too much or too little; exaggeration and eccentricity, not permissible even in art, are unpardonable in conduct. The limit within which moderation lies cannot be exactly fixed, practical good sense must decide; by practical good sense is meant the current opinion of the particular society in which we happen to live, to be ascertained in case of doubt by reference to the best advisers we can procure.

This definition is Aristotle's answer to the question so frequently asked by the Platonic Sokrates, "What is virtue?" "What is the common characteristic of the separate acts called 'virtuous' by reason of which the general name is given to them?" In the Menon and elsewhere Sokrates declares that he does not know what this common characteristic is; the single virtues he knows, but he does not know any general expression predicable of each and all of them, and he avers moreover that he never met any one who did know.⁷⁸ Nor do we find anywhere in Plato a complete and comprehensive answer to the question put in the Menon. Various attributes are assigned to virtue in different dialogues—"Virtue is the best tendency"; "Virtue is praised for itself alone";⁷⁹ "Virtue is a habit by which its possessor is called good?" But a precise definition marking off the habit of good conduct from other habits and pointing out

⁷⁸ ἀλλὰ σύ, ὦ Σώκρατες, ἀληθῶς οὐδ' ὃ τι ἀρετή ἐστὶν οἶσθα;—Μὴ μόνον γε, ὦ ἑταῖρε, ἀλλὰ οὐδ' ἄλλω πω ἐνέτυχον εἰδότει, ὥς ἐμοὶ δοκῶ.—πολλὰς αὖ εὐρήκαμεν ἀρετὰς μίαν ζητοῦντες—τὴν δὲ μίαν, ἣ διὰ πάντων τούτων ἐστίν, οὐ δυνάμεθα ἀνευρεῖν. Plato, Menon. 71 C; 74 A.

⁷⁹ ἀρετή—διάθεσις ἡ βελτίστη—ἕξις καθ' ἣν τὸ ἔχον ἀγαθὸν λέγεται—καθ' αὐτὴν ἐπαινέτη.

the origin and nature of the acts constituting it was first given by Aristotle. In framing this definition he proceeded partly on psychological and physiological grounds, and partly on direct observation of the opinions of mankind. That it is a habit and not either a faculty or a feeling he derives from an analysis of the functions of the mind; that it is a habit determined by choice he gets also by psychological analysis with some assistance from the judgments of society; that it is a habit which aims at the middle course he deduces as well from physiological data and from the practice of technical and practical arts as from what is commonly said on the subject.

These conclusions he proceeds inductively to verify by a detailed examination of the chief kinds of conduct extending from Book III., Chapter 6, to the end of Book V. It will be useful, he observes, to do this for two reasons, "We shall learn more of the nature of moral disposition in general if we examine the special cases of it, and we shall strengthen our proof that virtue is a mean state if we see that each of the virtues is so."⁸⁰

⁸⁰ οὐ χεῖρον δὲ καὶ τὰς τοιαύτας ἐπελθεῖν· μᾶλλον τε γὰρ ἂν εἰδείημεν τὰ περὶ τὸ ἦθος, καθ' ἕκαστον διελθόντες, καὶ μεσότητας εἶναι τὰς ἀρετὰς πιστεύσαιομεν ἂν, ἐπὶ πάντων οὕτως ἔχον συνιδόντες. 1127, a 14.

CHAPTER IV

Book III., Chapters 6–12.
(1115, a 4—1119, b 18).

SPECIAL KINDS OF GOOD CONDUCT

COURAGE AND SELF-RESTRAINT AND THEIR OPPOSITES

ὦ φίλοι, ἀνέρες ἔστε καὶ ἄλκιμον ἦτορ ἔλεσθε,
ἀλλήλους τ' αἰδεῖσθε κατὰ κρατερὰς ὑσμίνας·
αἰδομένων ἀνδρῶν πλείονες σόοι ἢ ἐπέφανται·
φευγόντων δ' οὔτ' ἄρ κλέος ὄρνυται οὔτε τις ἀλκή.

Il. v. 529.

οὐ γάρ τι στυγερῇ ἐπὶ γαστέρι κύντερον ἄλλο
ἔπλετο.—

Odys. vii. 216.

The virtue of prosperity is temperance; the virtue of adversity is fortitude, which in morals is the more heroical virtue.

Bacon, Essay on Adversity.

THE kinds of conduct described in the third, fourth and fifth books of the Ethics do not exhaust all the cases of good and bad conduct, nor were they intended so to do.¹ They are conspicuous examples only, considered to be sufficiently numerous and varied to warrant the inference that all praiseworthy conduct is moderate and all blameworthy conduct excessive.

With the exception of courage and self-restraint,² whose place is justified by considerations to be presently mentioned, no clear ground can be assigned for the order in which the several virtues are discussed; nor is there any reason beyond that of arrangement, not very material for Aristotle's present purpose, and not in truth a

¹ Notwithstanding the statement to the contrary in 1115, a 4 (εἰπωμεν τίνες εἰσὶ καὶ περὶ ποῖα καὶ πῶς· ἅμα δ' ἔσται δῆλον καὶ πόσαι εἰσὶν); single texts cannot be pressed.

² The words "Temperance" and "Intemperance," by which σωφροσύνη and ἀκολασία are usually and naturally rendered, have been so much abused by controversy as to be unfit for rational purposes. It is practically impossible to avoid the associations connected with the misuse of the words, and the best course is to present them at once to the disputants on the drink question for their own exclusive use, and to find some such substitutes as self-restraint and self-indulgence.

conspicuous merit of the Ethics as a whole, why a logical order should have been observed. Modern readers are apt to expect more systematic arrangement of details than ancient writers in general, and Aristotle in particular, thought necessary.

Aristotle opens his review of the special kinds of conduct with courage and self-restraint, virtues which he closely connects and considers to form the basis of moral character. Without accepting the psychological theory which caused Plato to give such prominence to them, he had reasons of his own for placing them at the head of his list. It is his usual plan in biological and sociological inquiries, first to examine the simpler elements out of which a compound whole is formed—the parts of an animal before the animal itself, the family before the State—the parts being simpler, therefore more general, therefore prior in the order of nature to the more complex wholes.³ The natural course of investigation is thus to watch things as they develop from the beginning.⁴ Following this plan in his psychology he proceeds from growth to sensation, from sensation to intelligence, from the intelligence which grasps individual objects to that which combines many kinds of knowledge in the sciences relating to man. It would have been an inversion of this process to discuss the complex altruistic virtues which are developed in social life, before the simple self-regarding ones on which life itself depends. Now the two physical and deeply seated

³ οὐ γὰρ ταῦτὸν πρότερον τῇ φύσει καὶ πρὸς ἡμᾶς πρότερον λέγω δὲ πρὸς ἡμᾶς μὲν πρότερα καὶ γνωριμώτερα τὰ ἐγγύτερον τῆς αἰσθήσεως, ἀπλῶς δὲ πρότερα καὶ γνωριμώτερα τὰ πορρώτερον. Anal. Post. i. 2. 71, b 34.

⁴ ἐξ ἀρχῆς τὰ πράγματα φύμενα βλέπειν. Polit. i. 2. 1252, a 24.

feelings called spirit or anger, and appetite or desire,⁵ both belonging to the irrational side of our nature, are in a greater degree than any others necessary to existence.⁶ But the considerations which justified Aristotle in selecting courage and self-restraint as fundamental, would have induced him, one would have thought, to give the first place to self-restraint. Self-restraint, in the limited sense in which it is considered in this book, is conduct in relation to the pleasures of touch and taste.⁷ Now touch is the sense which appears earliest in the history of animal life, being the only one possessed by all animals without exception.⁸ It is the most general and physically the most important; its perversion is fatal.⁹ Other senses serve intelligent life, but this subserves life itself. The bodily movements initiated by objects which produce the pleasures resulting from touch and taste demand, therefore, a stricter control than conduct of any other kind, both for reason just given, and also because the pleasures excited are in an

5 The two Greek words for anger and appetite or desire are etymologically connected. Their root signifies a strong rushing movement (*θυ-μός*; *ἐπι-θυ-μία*; so *αἰχμή* (*αἵσσω*) in the sense of spirit, quick movement, a confident, sanguine disposition. (*Æschy. Agam.* 483.)

6 *φυσικωτάτη δ' ἔοικεν ἡ [ἀνδρεία] διὰ τὸν θυμὸν εἶναι.* 1117, a 4. *ἡ μὲν τῆς τροφῆς φυσική.* 1118, b 9.

7 1118, a 23.

8 *κοινοτάτη δὴ τῶν αἰσθήσεων καθ' ἣν ἡ ἀκολασία· καὶ δόξειεν ἂν δικαίως ἐπονείδιστος εἶναι, ὅτι οὐχ ἡ ἀνθρωποὶ ἐσμεν ὑπάρχει, ἀλλ' ἡ ζῷα.* 1118, b 1.

9 *ἄνευ γὰρ ἀφῆς δέδεικται ὅτι ἀδύνατον εἶναι ζῶον. διὸ ἡ τῶν ἀπτῶν ὑπερβολὴ οὐ μόνον τὸ αἰσθητήριον φθείρει, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ ζῶον—.* *De Anima* iii. 13. 435, b 17.

especial manner direct and powerful, being produced, in Aristotle's view, by the immediate contact of the object of sense with the bodily organs; whereas the impressions on other senses are mediate only, being effected by the agency of air, water, and in the case of sight, by a transparent medium. Appetition or desire is therefore simpler, and covers a wider ground than any other feeling. In its most general sense it is considered by Aristotle as "a striving after what is pleasant"; a physical want (food, for example) has to be satisfied, its satisfaction is accompanied with pleasure, and animals satisfy the want for the sake of the pleasure and would not otherwise be led to do so. Appetite extends over the whole range of animal life, which anger presumably does not. We have no reason to think that jellyfish are ever angry, but it is probable that they are hungry. Appetite, therefore, is at once the simplest and the most general of the impulses, being the *sine quâ non* of animal life; regarded as an element of conduct, it differs from anger in that its exercise is pleasurable, whilst anger is attended with pain; for this reason Aristotle thinks that it is easier to be right with regard to this feeling than in the case of anger. "It is more difficult," he says, "to bear pain than to abstain from pleasure."¹⁰ That, however, is a doubtful statement, depending as it does on an incalculable element, the quantum of pain or pleasure in a given case and the relative weight of the two influences. There are many animals, and some human beings amongst them, to whom the gratification of appetite is the one sincere pleasure of life; how great it must be we can only guess from observing the severe and continuous labour which the lower animals undergo for the sake

¹⁰ χαλεπώτερον γὰρ τὰ λυπηρὰ ὑπομένειν ἢ τῶν ἡδέων ἀπέχεσθαι. 1117, a 34.

of it, a labour which, in some cases, absorbs almost the whole of their conscious activity. Homer has described in many vigorous passages what animals will do and endure in order to satisfy the craving for food; how the lion will leap even into the closely fenced fold, and how the ass will allow sticks to be broken on its back rather than forego its pasture.¹¹ "There is nothing more shameless than the horrible feeling of hunger."¹² The proper regulation of this appetite is self-restraint. It is easy to see why Aristotle begins with courage and self-restraint. The feelings which these two virtues control are more ingrained, they have a wider range and are more necessary to animal life than any others which can be named. If we look to their relative importance in biology we should have expected precedence to have been given to self-restraint, but from the ethical point of view we can guess why Aristotle gave the first place to an active virtue like courage, rather than to a passive one like self-restraint, the superiority of action being always strongly insisted upon by him. Anger is the positive impulse which gives rise to the most energetic forms of bodily motion, and both Plato and Aristotle require and insist on this quality of forwardness, especially in the presence of danger, as distinctive of it.¹³

¹¹ ὥς δ' ὅτ' ὄνος παρ' ἄρουραν ἰὼν ἐβίησατο παῖδας
νωθῆς, ᾧ δὴ πολλὰ περὶ ρόπαλ' ἀμφὶς ἐάγη,
κείρει δ' εἰσελθὼν βαθὺ λήϊον· οἱ δέ τε παῖδες
τύπτουσιν ροπάλοισι· βίη δέ τε νηπίη αὐτῶν.

Il. xi. 558.

¹² οὐ γάρ τι στυγερῇ ἐπὶ γαστέρι κύντερον ἄλλο
ἔπλετο.—

Odys. vii. 216.

¹³ ἱτητικώτατον γὰρ ὁ θυμὸς πρὸς τοὺς κινδύνους. 1116,
b 26. πότερον τοὺς ἀνδρείους θαρραλέους λέγεις, ἢ ἄλλο τι;

Anger is, then, a rapid, unreasoning, and instinctive feeling, and it would be useless for its main purpose, that of self-preservation, if it were not. If you come into the neighbourhood of a tigress with cubs or tread on the tail of a rattlesnake, those animals do not pause to reflect; they act at once and without distinguishing, and otherwise they might just as well not act at all. Their preservation and that of their kind depends on the feeling of anger being suddenly excited, and upon the rapidity and effectiveness of the movements which it starts. To man in the uncivilised state anger is almost as necessary to self-preservation as to the lower animals, and even in the civilised state occasions often arise when safety requires that full scope should be given to it; if you wait for the resources of civilisation you may wait too long—“*ante pœna injusta luenda quam justa repetenda erit.*”

“The reason and end,” says Butler,¹⁴ “for which man was made liable to this passion is that he might be better qualified to prevent and likewise, and perhaps chiefly, to resist and defeat sudden force, violence, and opposition considered merely as such and without regard to the fault or demerit of him who is the author of them.”

Now this feeling, educated and properly directed, or, as Aristotle says, “with the addition of deliberate choice and an end,” becomes courage.¹⁵ Pending the time when we can safely rely on nations settling their differences by some other arbitrament than that of war, anger, and courage as a modification of it, is indispensable to states.

καὶ ἴτας γέ, ἔφη, ἐφ’ ἃ οἱ πολλοὶ φοβοῦνται ἰέναι. Plato, Protag. 349 E.

¹⁴ Serm. viii.

¹⁵ φυσικωτάτη δ’ ἔοικεν ἡ διὰ τὸν θυμὸν εἶναι, καὶ προσλαβοῦσα προαίρεσιν καὶ τὸ οὗ ἕνεκα ἀνδρεία εἶναι. 1117, a 4.

If men are to exhibit the altruistic virtues they must first possess the selfish ones; if a society is to be wise and just, it must exist, and its existence, even under present arrangements, and still more clearly under those in force in the ancient world, requires the masculine energetic virtue of courage.

Aristotle discusses courage, self-restraint, and other kinds of good conduct separately, without giving any hint that he considers them to be necessarily connected. There is one exception, that of magnanimity. In that single case it is said that all the virtues must meet. The man of lofty mind and high aspirations, to whom all that other men count great is little, if he is to justify his title must possess in the fullest degree all the excellences of conduct.¹⁶ He is so much above the ordinary motives to misconduct that he has no temptation to do wrong: he gives distinction to the virtues instead of receiving it from them.¹⁷ This is obviously a fancy picture describing an impossible ideal, and in no other instance, although courage, self-restraint, liberality and other good qualities are described at great length and with more detail than is bestowed on magnanimity, is there any indication that they require to be accompanied by excellences of other kinds as a condition of their existence.

Some commentators on the *Ethics*,¹⁸ however, insist

¹⁶ καὶ δόξειεν ἂν εἶναι μεγαλοψύχου τὸ ἐν ἐκάστη ἀρετῇ μέγα. 1123, b 29.

¹⁷ ἔοικε μὲν οὖν ἡ μεγαλψυχία οἷον κόσμος τις εἶναι τῶν ἀρετῶν. 1124, a 1.

¹⁸ Stewart, *Notes to Nicomachæan Ethics*, pp. 201-2. "The various virtues, although for greater clearness they may be treated separately, are not separately existent, but each exists only as the others exist, and form an

that Aristotle's theory is that the kinds of good conduct described in the third and fourth books are related as indivisible parts of one whole; courage, for example, implying the qualities of self-restraint, justice, liberality, social agreeability and the rest, and each of these in turn involving courage. Readers of the Ethics will search in vain for any authority for this proposition, which is neither consistent with Aristotle's account of the genesis of conduct nor with his own statements in the chapters before us. He tells us that a man becomes just and brave by acting justly and bravely, and in no other way,¹⁹ and so with other kinds of good conduct—that it is by habituation in definite and distinct directions, and

ὁρθὸς λόγος, or system, which is different (within limits) for each man" (p. 202). *ἀνδρεία* implies all the other virtues, being a member of the indivisible organism of the moral character; not a fitful principle of action, but mediating acts ultimately determined by the man's whole moral nature, and not by the accident of the moment which might arouse his θυμός. A man's *ἀνδρεία* is not a feeling which is born on the battlefield, but the spirit shown on the field by one who, not only has had experience of danger, but has cultivated the peaceful virtues of σωφροσύνη, δικαιοσύνη, ἐλευθεριότης, μεγαλοπρέπεια, and similarly, the spirit of *ἀνδρεία* is necessary to these peaceful virtues" (p. 201). "The one vice of cowardice or of rashness would amount to the demoralisation of the whole nature. We cannot conceive of the magnificence of the rash man or of the temperance of the coward" (p. 202).

¹⁹ εἴ οὖν λέγεται ὅτι ἐκ τοῦ τὰ δίκαια πράττειν ὁ δίκαιος γίνεται καὶ ἐκ τοῦ τὰ σώφρονα ὁ σώφρων· ἐκ δὲ τοῦ μὴ πράττειν ταῦτα οὐδεὶς ἂν οὐδὲ μελλήσειε γίνεσθαι ἀγαθός. 1105, b 9.

not by having an "indivisible organism," that the particular virtues are produced and maintained; but he gives no hint that before a man can control his animal passions he must have become accustomed to face things terrible in war, or that it is necessary that he should have been accustomed to be liberal before he can acquire the habit of self-restraint. It is said that "it is impossible to conceive of the temperance of the coward," but Aristotle himself had no difficulty in conceiving the liberality of the coward,²⁰ and he expressly says that it is wrong to imply that the vice of reckless extravagance is associated with other kinds of misconduct.²¹ In discussing justice, he says that many people can be virtuous so far as they themselves are concerned, but are unable to do their duty to their neighbour.²² These statements are inconsistent with the supposition that the unity of the virtues is the doctrine of the Ethics. The question was one with which Aristotle was quite familiar. It forms the chief topic of discussion in the Protagoras, a work which he frequently cites or refers to. In that dialogue, Protagoras as the representative of the ordinary experience of mankind, on being asked by Sokrates whether it is possible for a man to have only a part of virtue, or whether it necessarily follows that if he has one virtue he must have all, replies that this is by no means necessary, for that many men are courageous and unjust,

²⁰ *ἐνιοι γὰρ ἐν τοῖς πολεμεκοῖς κινδύνους δειλοὶ ὄντες ἐλευθέριοι εἰσι καὶ πρὸς χρημάτων ἀποβολὴν εὐθαρσῶς ἔχουσιν.* 1115, a 20.

²¹ 1119, b 30. *βούλεται ἄσωτος εἶναι ὁ ἐν κακὸν ἔχων.* 6. 34.

²² *πολλοὶ γὰρ ἐν μὲν τοῖς οἰκείοις τῇ ἀρετῇ δύνανται χρῆσθαι, ἐν δὲ τοῖς πρὸς ἕτερον ἀδυνατοῦσιν.* Eth. 5. 1. 1129, b 33.

and just without being wise.²³ Sokrates denies and argues against this statement. His proof of the unity of virtue is based on the assumption that things having a common name must have a common nature,²⁴ and on that assumption, by a chain of reasoning which Aristotle would certainly not have approved, he succeeds in reducing all good conduct to the common term of knowledge.²⁵ That is the proof. In the sixth book of the *Ethics* Aristotle, commenting on this very discussion, observes that Sokrates went too far in saying that Virtue was a kind of reason, he prefers to say that it is "accompanied by reason,"²⁶ the truth being that all virtues fall under the domain of Prudence,²⁷ the relation of various kinds of good conduct to know-

²³ Plato, *Protag.* 329 E.

²⁴ Plato, *Protag.* 331 sqq. Aristotle is careful to point out the distinction between names which imply a community of nature (similarity of essential definition, Synonyms), and those which imply no such similarity (Homonyms). *Kat.* 1. 1. a 1. The distinction had not been before marked by distinctive words.

²⁵ Plato, *Protag.* 354 E—357 E.

²⁶ Σωκράτης μὲν οὖν λόγους τὰς ἀρετὰς ᾤετο εἶναι (ἐπιστήμας γὰρ εἶναι πάσας), ἡμεῖς δὲ μετὰ λόγον. *Eth.* 6. 13. 1144, b 28.

²⁷ ἅμα γὰρ τῇ φρονήσει μὲν οὐσὶ πᾶσαι ὑπάρξουσιν. *Eth.* 6. 13. 1145, a 1. ὑπάρχειν often indicates not only that one notion contains another, but also that one notion is contained in another. The words ἅμα τῇ φρονήσει πᾶσαι ὑπάρξουσιν here mean that all the virtues will be found to stand to prudence in the relation of species to genus; they do not mean that if you have prudence you will have all the other virtues as well. Aristotle puts his own point clearly when he says, "You cannot be good without

ledge, or to speak accurately, to prudence, being that of species to genus. This comment is completely in accordance with Aristotle's view elsewhere expressed of the function of prudence and of its relation to the other virtues; it implies that each kind of good conduct retains its specific difference, although they all have the common property of being prudential.

But Aristotle considers that although Sokrates was wrong, Protagoras was not quite right. It will not do, he remarks, to say with him that the various kinds of good conduct are wholly unconnected; this may be true of natural good qualities which are independent of prudence, but as to moral qualities, prudence is a connecting link, being the distinctive excellence of the rational side of our nature, and to that extent, therefore, they are bound up together.²⁸ This is Aristotle's view. Metaphysicians, theologians and others who construct systems of absolute morals may insist that moral character is an indivisible organism, that a man who offends in one point is guilty of all, and that before he can be credited with any single virtue there must be what Plato called a conversion of the soul—in more modern language, a change of heart or a rectification of will. In moments of fervour moralists may say these things, and even believe them; but Aristotle's *Ethics* is not concerned with absolute or ecstatic morals. Out of the lecture-room we all admit that a brave man may have his passions under little control without ceasing to be brave; that a man may be temperate and yet not liberal, and we should be thought

being prudent, or prudent without being good." 1144, b 26.

²⁸ τοῦτο γὰρ κατὰ μὲν τὰς φυσικὰς ἀρετὰς ἐνδέχεται, καθ' ἃς δὲ ἀπλῶς λέγεται ἀγαθός, οὐκ ἐνδέχεται· ἅμα γὰρ τῇ φρονήσει μὲν οὔση πᾶσαι ὑπάρξουσιν. 1144, b 35.

uncharitable and censorious if we did not make these admissions. Theories of conduct, as Aristotle has more than once said, are to be accepted so far only as they agree with the facts of life, and of those facts, one of the most familiar is that no one is either wholly good or wholly bad.

COURAGE

TEXT AND REMARKS

ARISTOTLE'S chapters on courage are exceedingly well written, and form a model essay on the subject. They are clear, full of matter, and free from exaggeration and sentimentality. They are, moreover, better arranged and read more consecutively than most other parts of the book.

The subject had been a good deal discussed in the Platonic dialogues, and doubtless also in lectures and conversations in the Academy and elsewhere. The word "courage," whose literal meaning is "manliness," was originally used in Greek with reference to manliness in war, but like all general words, it had acquired in course of time a variety of secondary, or as Aristotle calls them, metaphorical meanings. Thus, men were said to be manly who were firm in resisting pleasure, or in bearing pain, or who faced poverty, disease, or death in any shape with fortitude.²⁹ Nor did popular language discriminate between cases in which evil, pain, or danger were met in ignorance, and cases in which they were fully realised. The Platonic Sokrates in the *Laches*, seeking a common expression for these various senses, found it no easy

²⁹ Plato, *Lach.* 191 D-E.

matter to frame one.³⁰ It was suggested that courage might be the same thing as intelligent endurance, that it was the knowledge of things terrible in war and in all other matters. The Athenian general Nikias, who is one of the interlocutors, denies that wild animals are courageous, because they have no intelligence; he calls them "bold." Sokrates points out that this definition implies that courage is the knowledge of good and evil.

The point that courage is essentially a matter of knowledge is more fully worked out in the fourth book of the Republic and in the Protagoras. Courage is defined in the former place as "the power of holding fast a right conventional opinion concerning things to be feared and not to be feared in all circumstances; ³¹ the "right opinion" in question being conceived as "the opinion created by law through education in the citizens of the state." ³²

Plato here makes all fearful things the subject matter of courage, everything without exception of which man may be said to be afraid.³³ But in the Protagoras a distinction is drawn; courage is called "wisdom about

³⁰ καίτοι ἡμεῖς ἠρωτῶμεν ὅλην ἀνδρείαν ὃ τι εἴη—τί ὂν ἐν πᾶσι τούτοις ταῦτόν ἐστιν. Lach. 199 C; 191 E. οὐκ ἄρα εὐρήκομεν, ὦ Νικία, ἀνδρεία ὃ τι ἔστιν. Lach. 199 E.

³¹ σωτηρίαν διὰ παντὸς δόξης ὀρθῆς τε καὶ νομίμου δεινῶν περὶ καὶ μὴ ἀνδρείαν ἔγωγε καλῶ καὶ τίθεμαι. Plato, Repub. 430 B.

³² τῆς δόξης τῆς ὑπὸ νόμον διὰ τῆς παιδείας γεγонуίας περὶ τῶν δεινῶν. Plato, Repub. 429 C.

³³ διὰ παντὸς δὲ ἔλεγον αὐτὴν σωτηρίαν τῷ ἔν τε λύπαις ὄντα διασώζεσθαι αὐτὴν καὶ ἐν ἡδοναῖς καὶ ἐν ἐπιθυμίαις καὶ ἐν φόβοις. Ibid.

things terrible and not terrible,"³⁴ and it is laid down that there are dangers which a courageous man should not and would not affront, and that it is in being able to know and distinguish these things that the virtue consists. Readers of Plato's dialogues would have found it difficult to frame a clear view of the quality of courage from these statements; they would have been unable to answer the question in the *Laches*, "What is courage as a whole? What is the definition which covers each and every act which we call courageous?" and they would probably have acquiesced in the confession of ignorance and hopelessness which Sokrates in that dialogue professes, rather than in the confident answer he gives in the *Republic* and *Protagoras*. Aristotle does not accept those answers; he dissents from the identification of courage and knowledge, and points out that it is precisely where he has no knowledge that the truly brave man best exhibits his quality.³⁵

He deals with the matter in his own way; he does not attempt a definition which will include all the various and sometimes misleading applications of the word. Such definitions as "Courage is knowledge," "Courage is wisdom," "Courage is endurance," are so wide as to be useless. If praise and blame are to be consistently and intelligently applied to conduct, we must know what we are talking about; to say "Courage

34 οὐκοῦν ἡ τῶν δεινῶν καὶ μὴ δεινῶν ἀμαθία δειλία ἂν εἴη; Ἐπένευσεν.—Οὐκοῦν ἡ τῶν δεινῶν καὶ μὴ δεινῶν σοφία ἐναντία τῇ τούτων ἀμαθίᾳ ἐστὶ; Καὶ ἐνταῦθα ἔτι ἐπένευσεν. Plato, *Protag.* 360 C–D.

35 διὸ καὶ ἀνδρειοτέρου δοκεῖ εἶναι τὸ ἐν τοῖς αἰφνιδίοις φόβοις ἄφοβον καὶ ἀτάραχον εἶναι ἢ ἐν τοῖς προδήλοις· ἀπὸ ἕξσεως γὰρ μᾶλλον ἦν, ὅτι ἦττον ἐκ παρασκευῆς. 1117, a 17.

is knowledge" would make any rational social judgment about it almost as impossible as to say that it implies all other good qualities, and that a man cannot be brave on the field of battle unless he has cultivated the peaceful virtues.

CHAPTER 6.—Putting aside, then, for the moment the derivative and figurative senses of the word which are examined later on, Aristotle defines courage properly and distinctively so named, as "an habitual mode of action lying between over-confidence and fear in the face of death in war.³⁶ It keeps, however, to the side of confidence, or, as it is otherwise but not so clearly expressed, "it has more to do with objects of fear."³⁷ Fear is the field in which courage exercises itself; Aristotle adopts the definition of fear given in the *Laches*, "The expectation of evil," but he points out that there are many evils with which a brave man as such has no concern; such as loss of his good name, poverty, disease, things which he is rightly afraid of in the sense that he would rather avoid them, but not in his capacity of a courageous man; the fearful thing which, as such, he is always ready to meet is the King of Terrors, Death, for death is the end of all things, and beyond it there is nothing either good or bad.³⁸ And inasmuch as the value of all conduct is determined by its end, the highest courage is shown in affronting death in war, where danger in its most honourable form is to be found, and in being fearless in the sudden emergencies which occur on the field of

³⁶ 1115, a 6; 1115, a 24; 1115, a 30.

³⁷ 1117, a 30.

³⁸ *πέρας γάρ, καὶ οὐδὲν ἔτι τῷ τεθνεῶτι δοκεῖ οὔτ' ἀγαθὸν οὔτε κακὸν εἶναι.* 1115, a 26.

battle and which seem to have death as their consequence.³⁹

It is not the business of a brave man as such to meet death by drowning or disease, and although he will as a matter of course be perfectly cool and collected when these accidents occur, he will be annoyed at having to die under circumstances which bring him so little credit.⁴⁰ The language of Odysseus when he was shipwrecked exactly expresses Aristotle's meaning; he was not in the least afraid, but he was irritated and disappointed at the prospect of being drowned, when he might have done so much better by falling under the Trojan spears over the body of Achilles.⁴¹

What is often called moral courage is therefore, in Aristotle's opinion, not courage at all; and war, which according to some views is an unmitigated evil, was regarded by him as the proper and exclusive field for the exercise of this important virtue. Aristotle's opinion of the relation of peace to war must be kept in mind in connection with his theory of courage. Peace is the end and object of war; without peace there can be no leisure, and without leisure neither the necessities nor the refinements of life can be obtained, nor will there be room for

³⁹ κυρίως δὴ λέγοιτ' ἂν ἀνδρείος ὁ περὶ τὸν καλὸν θάνατον ἀδεής, καὶ ὅσα θάνατον ἐπιφέρει ὑπόγνια ὄντα. 1115, a 32.

⁴⁰ 1115, a 35.

⁴¹ ὥς δὴ ἐγὼ γ' ὄφελον θανέειν καὶ πότμον ἐπισπεῖν
ἡματι τῷ, ὅτε μοι πλείστοι χαλκήρια δοῦρα
Τρῶες ἐπέρριψαν περὶ Πηλεΐωνι θανόντι·
τῷ κ' ἔλαχον κτερέων, καὶ μεν κλέος ἦγον Ἀχαιοί·
νῦν δέ με λευγαλέω θανάτῳ εἴμαρτο ἄλῶναι.

Odys. 5. 308.

the intellectual activity in which the highest life consists.⁴² The existence, therefore, of the state as the field of exercise for the virtues of conduct, depends on its ability to resist aggression and to hold its own against all comers ⁴³—"Si vis pacem, para bellum." War, moreover, has its own virtues. It exercises an elevating effect on character; it compels people to be just and moderate, whereas peace and prosperity tend to make them overweening.⁴⁴ There was yet another reason which led Aristotle to exclude from his ideal that passive endurance which is often thought to be the highest form of courage. It affords no room for action. You are powerless, and can do nothing to help yourself; true courage is active; in order to play the man, there must be circumstances which permit you to put forth your powers and to fight for your hand.⁴⁵ Courage in man is the feeling which causes wild animals to attack those who wound them, but

⁴² τέλος γάρ, ὥσπερ εἴρηται πολλάκις, εἰρήνη μὲν πολέμου, σχολή δ' ἀσχολίας. χρήσιμοι δὲ τῶν ἀρετῶν εἰσὶ πρὸς τὴν σχολὴν καὶ διαγωγὴν, ὧν τε ἐν τῇ σχολῇ τὸ ἔργον καὶ ὧν ἐν τῇ ἀσχολίᾳ. *Polit.* iv. (vii.) 15, 1334, a 14.

⁴³ οἱ δὲ μὴ δυνάμενοι κινδυνεύειν ἀνδρείως δοῦλοι τῶν ἐπιόντων εἰσίν. *Polit.* iv. (vii.) 15, 1334, a 21.

⁴⁴ ὁ μὲν γὰρ πόλεμος ἀναγκάζει δικαίους εἶναι καὶ σωφρονεῖν, ἡ δὲ τῆς εὐτυχίας ἀπόλαυσις καὶ τὸ σχολάζειν μετ' εἰρήνης ὑβριστὰς ποιεῖ μάλλον. *l.c.* 1334, a 25.

⁴⁵ ἅμα δὲ καὶ ἀνδρίζονται ἐν οἷς ἐστὶν ἀλκή ἢ καλὸν τὸ ἀποθανεῖν. 1115, b 4. Aristotle calls teeth, tusks, horns, claws, and other natural offensive weapons τὰ πρὸς ἀλκήν. *Hist. animal.* iv. 11. 538, b 15. Agamemnon, exhorting his soldiers to be men, reminds them that if they run away they will get neither reputation nor safety—φευγόντων δ' οὐτ' ἄρ κλέος ὄρνυται οὔτε τις ἀλκή. *Il.* v. 532.

civilised and directed to a proper end.⁴⁶ Its basis is, however, purely physical, and its real justification is self-preservation, and ultimately the preservation of the species. The lowest orders of animals do not possess, because they do not need, courage; the race is preserved by other means, by an exuberant fertility or by their power of eluding the observation of enemies, but in many of the higher orders, and in man the highest, means of offence and defence are absolutely necessary.

To do and to endure in war, to be ready to meet death on the field of battle, with a full knowledge of the dangers encountered and a full determination to meet them and for an adequate end, is Aristotle's conception of courage in its strict sense. But the object must justify the sacrifice. To make your quietus with a bare bodkin in order to escape the law's delay, or the pangs of despised love, is not courage.⁴⁷

CHAPTER 7.—The brave man has already been said to preserve a mean between fear and confidence. Aristotle points out in the seventh chapter some of the distinctions which must be taken before this definition can be correctly applied. There are some things so overwhelming in their force and consequences, that every reasonable person dreads them; to defy the storm like Lear, "not to fear waves or earthquakes, as is reported of the Kelts, is mere rant and folly."⁴⁸

⁴⁶ ἀνδρεῖοι γὰρ εἶναι δοκοῦσι καὶ οἱ διὰ θυμὸν ὥσπερ τὰ θηρία ἐπὶ τοὺς τρώσαντας φερόμενα. 1116, b 24.

⁴⁷ τὸ δ' ἀποθνήσκειν φεύγοντα πενίαν ἢ ἔρωτα ἢ τι λυπηρὸν οὐκ ἀνδρείου. 1116, a 15.

⁴⁸ εἴη δ' ἂν τις μαινόμενος ἢ ἀνάληγτος, εἰ μηδὲν φοβοῖτο, μήτε σεισμὸν μήτε κύματα, καθάπερ φασὶ τοὺς Κελτούς. 1115, b 26.

The brave man is undismayed so far only as a reasonable human being can be, and no farther.⁴⁹ Aristotle would have disapproved of the exaggeration of representing the good man standing unmoved amid the ruins of a broken world; ⁵⁰ that would be folly, and although the good man may have faults he is not a fool.⁵¹

On the opposite side of this excessive fearlessness there is the extreme of timidity, and of what Aristotle distinguishes as deficiency in confidence, in reality only two aspects of the same thing, either of which amount to cowardice. On the other side there is over-confidence. The rash or over-confident man is distinguishable from the brave man, by his habit of rushing eagerly into danger and then holding back; the brave man is keen in the moment of action and quiet beforehand.⁵²

Although the brave man does not wish to be killed or wounded, he will take the risk of these things for the sake of honour or to escape disgrace.⁵³ "It is not always pleasant to be virtuous," says Aristotle, "except in so far as the end is reached."⁵⁴ This end, as we have already

⁴⁹ ἀνέκπληκτος ὡς ἄνθρωπος. 1115, a 10.

⁵⁰ ——— Si fractus illabatur orbis

Impavidum ferient ruinæ.

Hor. Od. iii. 3.

⁵¹ τῶν κατ' ἀρετὴν οὐδεὶς ἡλίθιος οὐδ' ἀνόητος. 1123, b 3.

⁵² καὶ οἱ μὲν θρασεῖς προπετεῖς, καὶ βουλόμενοι πρὸ τῶν κινδύνων ἐν αὐτοῖς δ' ἀφίστανται, οἱ δ' ἀνδρεῖοι ἐν τοῖς ἔργοις ὀξεῖς, πρότερον δ' ἡσύχιοι. 1116, a 7.

⁵³ ὁ μὲν θάνατος καὶ τὰ τραύματα λυπηρὰ τῷ ἀνδρείῳ καὶ ἄκοντι ἔσται, ὑπομενεῖ δὲ αὐτὰ ὅτι καλὸν ἢ ὅτι αἰσχρὸν τὸ μή- 1117, b 7.

⁵⁴ οὐ δὴ ἐν ἀπάσαις ταῖς ἀρεταῖς τὸ ἡδέως ἐνεργεῖν ὑπάρχει, πλὴν ἐφ' ὅσον τοῦ τέλους ἐφάπτεται. 1117, b 15.

learned, is happiness. Courage, therefore, has the peculiarity that its highest exercise may lead to death, which cannot be happiness, because it is the end of all things and beyond it there is nothing to look forward to.⁵⁵ It is on this ground, and because it is more meritorious to do what is painful than to abstain from what is pleasant, that courage is justly praised."⁵⁶ Aristotle has here got into a difficulty, which he seeks to evade by saying, "not but that the end is pleasant, but it is obscured by its surroundings, as in boxing, where the end, the crown and the honour, is pleasant, but the punishment is painful."⁵⁷ It is thus that he reconciles the two statements that death is painful to the brave man, and that death, the end which he is specially prepared to face, is pleasant.

Aristotle is, in fact, misled by his assumption that ultimate ends always influence conduct. Men do not generally act with those ends in view, nor are they usually praised and blamed with reference to them. Nor does he sufficiently allow for the influence of several proximate ends acting together. Many a man voluntarily leaves his comforts and pleasures and takes the certainty of the hardships of war, and the chance of being killed, from the feeling that it is expected of him, that he would not be well thought of if he did not, or purely from animal spirits and a love of adventure, or from all these motives combined. It does not necessarily occur to him to consider whether he will be happier if things turn out badly and he is killed. Even where a man faces certain death, the operative motive, could it be analysed, would probably be found to be compounded of the innumerable

⁵⁵ 1115, a 26.

⁵⁶ 1117, a 33.

⁵⁷ 1117, a 35.

influences which are the result of the social atmosphere in which he has lived. These are the motives which chiefly regulate all conduct, and the ethical right—*τὸ ὀρθὸν τῶν ἠθικῶν*—both in courage and in other cases is determined by them rather than by a conscious appreciation of ultimate ends. Aristotle correctly describes the aggregate of such influences by such phrases as “it is the right thing to do” (*ὥς δεῖ*), “it is honourable to do it,” “it is dishonourable not to do it,” (*ἔστι καλὸν ἢ ὅτι αἰσχρὸν τὸ μὴ*); it is only when we reflect upon conduct and seek to justify or criticise it from a wide point of view that we pass from considerations of this kind and think of final ends.

CHAPTER 8.—Courage in its true sense having been described, Aristotle proceeds to mention five modifications of it.⁵⁸ He had already distinguished several cases in which the word “courage” is used metaphorically, such as fortitude in bearing pain or sickness, fearlessness in perils of the sea, or in spending money,⁵⁹ but the five cases to which he refers are not metaphorical; they have a real and not a fancied similarity to true courage, inasmuch as they all arise in war, the only field on which true courage can show itself.

⁵⁸ ἔστι μὲν οὖν ἡ ἀνδρεία τοιοῦτόν τι, λέγονται δὲ καὶ ἕτεραι κατὰ πέντε τρόπους. 1116, a 15.

⁵⁹ ἔνιοι γὰρ ἐν τοῖς πολεμικοῖς κινδύνοις δειλοὶ ὄντες ἐλευθήριοι εἰσι καὶ πρὸς χρημάτων ἀποβολὴν εὐθαρσῶς ἔχουσιν. 1115, a 20. This illustration is taken from Plato, *Lach.* 192 E: εἴ τις καρτερεῖ ἀναλίσκων ἀργύριον φρονίμως, εἰδὼς ὅτι ἀναλώσας πλεόν ἐκθήσεται, τοῦτον ἀνδρεῖον καλοῖς ἄν; Μὰ Δί' οὐκ ἔγωγε.

(1) "The first of the five modes, and the nearest to true courage, is called by Aristotle political courage.⁶⁰ It is a readiness to meet danger in war from the consideration of what people, and especially fellow-citizens or friends, will think, and from the desire to escape the disgrace or legal penalties which in many societies, and especially in military states, attach to the name of coward. Each of these motives, both the wish to be well thought of, and the wish to avoid reproach, is honourable."⁶¹ The expression "political courage" is found in the *Laches*, from which dialogue, like so many other illustrations in these chapters, it is doubtless borrowed.⁶² Aristotle illustrates it by a quotation from the well-known passage in the *Iliad* where Hektor determines to go out and meet Achilles, influenced by the thought of what Polydamas will say.⁶³ He distinguishes, however, moral from physical necessity; to be brave on physical compulsion, because you are placed in a position from which retreat is impossible, or owing to the threats or blows of your officers, is not political courage, although some might think it to be so; its motive is not an honourable dread of reproach. Political courage differs, therefore, from

⁶⁰ πρῶτον μὲν ἡ πολιτικὴ· μάλιστα γὰρ ἔοικεν. 1116, a 17. ὁμοίωται δ' αὕτη μάλιστα τῇ πρότερον εἰρημένη, ὅτι δι' ἀρετὴν γίνεται. 1116, a 27.

⁶¹ δι' αἰδῶ γὰρ [ἡ πολιτικὴ ἀνδρεία] καὶ διὰ καλοῦ ὀρεξιν (τιμῆς γὰρ) καὶ φυγὴν ὀνείδους, αἰσχροῦ ὄντος. 1116, a 28.

⁶² καὶ πρὸς τὰ πολιτικὰ ἀνδρεῖοι. *Lach.* 191 D. It is also found in the *Republic*, 430 C.

⁶³ Πουλυδάμας μοι πρῶτος ἐλεγχείην ἀναθήσει,
ὅς μ' ἐκέλευε Τρῳσὶ ποτὶ πτόλιν ἡγήσασθαι
νύχθ' ὑπὸ τήνδ' ὀλοήν, ὅτε τ' ὤρετο δῖος Ἀχιλλεύς,
ἀλλ' ἐγὼ οὐ πιθόμην.

Il. xxii. 100.

true courage, not in kind but in degree. Both are grounded on social opinion created by law and custom, but in one case the opinion is supported by the just admiration of conduct recognised as self-sacrificing, whilst in the other the motive of the action is prompted by inferior although still laudable considerations.

(2) "The second modification of true courage is experience, for which reason, says Aristotle, Sokrates thought courage to be knowledge.⁶⁴ Old soldiers often seem braver than they really are; sometimes they know that there is no real danger—many of the dangers of war are more apparent than real,⁶⁵ and even when the risk is serious they rely on their ability to extricate themselves.⁶⁶ But the man whose fighting power depends on his superiority is very likely to run when he sees his superiority vanish. There are cases in which trained and experienced mercenary soldiers are better than citizen levies; they know how to use their arms in the best

⁶⁴ ὅθεν καὶ ὁ Σωκράτης ᾤθη ἐπιστήμην εἶναι τὴν ἀνδρείαν. 1116, b 4. Sokrates considered all virtue to be knowledge. 1144, b 28. His opinion in the separate case of courage may be learned from Xenophon. Mem. iv. 6. οἱ μὲν γὰρ ἐπιστάμενοι τοῖς δεινοῖς τε καὶ ἐπικινδύνοις καλῶς χρῆσθαι ἀνδρεῖοί εἰσιν οἱ δὲ διαμαρτάνοντες τούτου δειλοί.

⁶⁵ δοκεῖ γὰρ εἶναι πολλὰ κενὰ τοῦ πολέμου, ἃ μάλιστα συνειρώκασιν οὗτοι. 1116, b 6.

⁶⁶ ἀλλ' ἐν πολέμῳ καρτεροῦντα ἄνδρα καὶ ἐθέλοντα μάχεσθαι, φρονίμως λογιζόμενον, εἰδότα μὲν ὅτι βοηθήσουσιν ἄλλοι αὐτῷ, πρὸς ἐλάττους δὲ καὶ φαυλοτέρους μαχεῖται ἢ μεθ' ὧν αὐτός ἐστιν, ἔτι δὲ χώρια ἔχει κρείττω—, τοῦτον τὸν μετὰ τῆς τοιαύτης φρονήσεως καὶ παρασχευῆς καρτεροῦντα ἀνδρεύτερον ἂν φαίης ἢ τὸν ἐν τῷ ἐναντίῳ στρατοπέδῳ ἐθέλοντα ὑπομένειν τε καὶ καρτερεῖν; Του ἐν τῷ ἐναντίῳ ἔμοιγε δοκεῖ, ὦ Σώκρατες. Plato, Lach. 193 A.

way; they are professionals and the others are amateurs. But they also know only too well how to take care of themselves; when they see that the game is up they fly, whilst the ignorant militia die at their post. It is sometimes a disadvantage to know too much, and this shows that courage is not knowledge."

(3) "Physical courage is a third variety. It is the groundwork of all courage. The sentiment which leads a brave man to face death in war for his country is at bottom the fierce instinct which man shares with wild animals—the courage of spirit.⁶⁷ Physical courage when properly motivated and properly directed becomes real courage.⁶⁸ The true soldier is roused and incited to action by animal spirits. His blood boils, he feels the joy of contest and this prompts the higher motive which actuates him.⁶⁹ But the man who acts on the impulse of anger often seeks merely to gratify his passion by injuring those who have roused his anger. "Revenge is sweet," but revenge is no part of the motive of courage, nor does it actuate the warrior as such. It is more akin to the feeling of a wild animal who has been wounded or disturbed. It is therefore not even a mode of courage, and should be distinguished as combativeness, although the two are somewhat parallel."⁷⁰

⁶⁷ ἀνδρεῖοι γὰρ εἶναι δοκοῦσιν καὶ οἱ διὰ θυμὸν ὥσπερ τὰ θηρία ἐπὶ τοὺς τρώσαντας φερόμενα, ὅτι καὶ οἱ ἀνδρεῖοι θυμοειδείς· ἰητικώτατον γὰρ ὁ θυμὸς πρὸς τοὺς κινδύνους. 1116, b 24.

⁶⁸ φυσικωτάτη δ' ἔοικεν ἡ διὰ τὸν θυμὸν εἶναι, καὶ προσλαβούσα προαίρεσιν καὶ τὸ οὐ ἔνεκα ἀνδρεία εἶναι. 1117, a 4.

⁶⁹ οἱ μὲν οὖν ἀνδρεῖοι διὰ τὸ καλὸν πράττουσιν, ὁ δὲ θυμὸς συνεργεῖ αὐτοῖς. 1116, b 30.

⁷⁰ μάχιμοι μὲν, οὐκ ἀνδρεῖοι δέ·—παραπλήσιον δ' ἔχουσί τι. 1117, a 7.

(4) "A fourth modification of courage arises from temperament. It is the hopefulness of the constitutionally sanguine man; not even this satisfies our notion of true courage,⁷¹ because a disposition to dwell on the chances in his favour causes him to think he will get the better of the enemy without loss to himself. Calculation of results therefore influences his conduct, whereas the man of genuine courage acts without thinking what will happen and from habit. Still, the two kinds have this point of similarity that both depend on confidence." Wine warms the blood, and those who have taken enough acquire a temporary courage. This by-form is mentioned but not discussed by Aristotle.

(5) "Nearly related to the courage of temperament is the courage of ignorance. It is, however, inferior in that the man who is brave because he does not know what is before him acts not from the opinion he has of himself but on his estimate of the danger he has to meet. When such men discover their error their boldness vanishes, as it did with the Argives who attacked some Lacedæmonians in mistake for a body of Sicyonians."

In describing each of the above five cases, distinguished as "modes of courage," Aristotle has used words referring to war; they all, like courage itself, refer to conduct exhibited on the field of battle and share that essential part of the definition of the genuine virtue.⁷² They are synonyms of courage, although not courage itself.⁷³

⁷¹ οὐδὲ δὴ οἱ εὐέλπιδες ὄντες ἀνδρείοι. 1117, a 9.

⁷² δόξειε δ' ἂν οὐδὲ περὶ θάνατον τὸν ἐν παντὶ ὁ ἀνδρείος εἶναι, οἷον ἐν θαλάττῃ ἢ νόσοις. ἐν τίσιν οὖν; ἢ ἐν τοῖς καλλίστοις; τοιοῦτοι δὲ οἱ ἐν πολέμῳ. 1115, a 28.

⁷³ Aspasius says, λέγει δὲ καὶ ἄλλας πέντε ἀνδρείας ὀνομάζεσθαι ὁ μὲν ὁ μὲν τῇ κυρίως λεγομένη ἀνδρείῳ. Aspasius 83. 30. I conceive this to be wrong. The five

To go out to meet your enemy from fear of losing your reputation is not the highest courage, but it is right and is what a brave man would do; to endure poverty or disease or drowning or loss of civil reputation fearlessly is no part of a courageous character, and consequently endurance in these matters is called courage only by a metaphor;⁷⁴ there is some likeness but not an essential one; they are univocal and not equivocal expressions.

This, then, is Aristotle's definition of courage, his answer to the question put but not answered in the *Laches*, "What is the whole of courage? What is the one common quality discernible in all the circumstances to which the word is applied; in war, in poverty, in pain, in disease?" His answer is that there is no essential attribute predicable of all these cases. There is true courage and there are five varieties or modifications of it, having some, but not all the essential attributes of true courage; there are also kinds of so-called courage which are not courage at all, in which the word is used in as pure metaphor as when we talk of the foot of a mountain and the foot of a man.

modes are ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ γένει with courage proper, and are therefore synonyms.

⁷⁴ κατὰ μεταφοράν· ἔχει γάρ τι ὅμοιον τῷ ἀνδρείῳ—καθ' ὁμοιότητα. 1115, a 15, 19. These are homonymous, not synonymous, equivalents for courage.

SELF-RESTRAINT

CHAPTERS 10 and 11.—Self-restraint is discussed by Aristotle from the point of view adopted in treating courage. He begins by distinguishing the various senses of a word of many meanings in order to arrive at a definition fundamental and precise enough to be reasoned from without confusion.

Discussions on conduct, he remarks,⁷⁵ cannot be properly carried on by the use of terms of wide general significance. The acts which are the subject of such discussion are particular acts with a limited scope, and our language must be adapted to their limitations. If no appropriate terms are in use, we must coin them for clearness sake and in order that our meaning may be followed. Both the warning and the advice are required in the case of self-restraint. The meaning of the word had been much discussed in the Platonic dialogues, now from one point of view and now from another; it had been called “the mastery over pleasures and desires,” “a mastery over *some* pleasures and

⁷⁵ ἐν γὰρ τοῖς περὶ τὰς πράξεις λόγοις οἱ μὲν καθόλου κενώτεροί εἰσιν, οἱ δ' ἐπὶ μέρους ἀληθινώτεροι· περὶ γὰρ τὰ καθ' ἕκαστα αἱ πράξεις. Eth. 2. 7. 1107, a 29. πειρατεῖν—ὀνοματὰ ποιεῖν σαφηνείας ἕνεκα καὶ τοῦ εὐπαρακολουθήτου. 1108, a 19.

desires," "doing all things in a quiet and orderly way," "doing your own business," and, more comprehensively still, "a general agreement of all classes in the state with respect to government." "Self-restraint in the state is the unanimity with which all classes recognise and respect the proper functions of each; in the individual, it is the subordination of angry feeling to reason."⁷⁶ It is not to be supposed that in a systematic treatise on morals, Plato would have admitted this variety of meaning, much of which is avowedly tentative and dialectic only, but it was not the less confusing that so many significations should have been attached to a much used word on his authority. Aristotle therefore endeavours to fix its use and to give it a meaning, conformable to prevailing language and ideas. He defines self-restraint as good conduct with regard to those desires which are necessary to animal life; a mean between self-indulgence and the unnamed and almost unknown quality of pure indifference to physical pleasure.⁷⁷ In its relation to pleasure and pain it stands in contrast to courage; pain is the sphere of courage, pleasure is the sphere of self-restraint; as Bacon puts it, one is the virtue of adversity, the other of prosperity; and inasmuch as it is easier, in Aristotle's opinion, to abstain from pleasure than to endure pain, self-restraint is less meritorious than courage and self-indulgence more culpable than cowardice. "Self-restraint is not, how-

⁷⁶ τὸ κρατεῖν ἡδονῶν καὶ ἐπιθυμιῶν. Plato, Conv. 196 C. ἡ σωφροσύνη ἐστὶ καὶ ἡδονῶν τιμῶν καὶ ἐπιθυμιῶν ἐγκράτεια. Plato, Repub. 430 E; Plato, Charm. 159 B; 161 B; Repub. 432 A.

⁷⁷ εἰ δὲ τῷ μηδὲν ἐστὶν ἡδὺ μηδὲ διαφέρει ἕτερον ἑτέρου, πόρρω ἂν εἴη τοῦ ἀνθρώπου εἶναι· οὐ τέτυχε δ' ὁ τοιοῦτος ὀνόματος διὰ τὸ μὴ πάνυ γίνεσθαι. 1119, a 9.

ever, exercisable with regard to all pleasures even of the body, but only to those which are bound up with the exercise of the senses, and not even all of these. It has nothing to do with the intellectual senses of sight and hearing. People who are fond of form and colour are neither praised for their moderation in these things nor blamed if they enjoy them immoderately. 'And yet,' Aristotle says, 'it seems possible to take a right pleasure even in such matters;' ⁷⁸ so with music and acting—a man may be a musical fanatic or immoderately fond of going to the theatre, but he could not therefore be accused of self-indulgence." ⁷⁹

Aristotle's remark on the fine arts deserves attention; "Even in such things," he says, "it seems possible to take a proper pleasure." To a modern reader, accustomed to the language in which fine art is spoken of, this seems singularly tame and unsympathetic. But we must remember that although the Greeks, and especially the Athenians, had a cultivated feeling for beauty and a natural good taste as well as a mastery over technical details which made them excellent judges of what is right in art, the fine arts held a very moderate place in their esteem. They made no fuss about the architects and sculptors whose works now attract the attention and compel the admiration of the world, looking on them, indeed, as little better than skilled mechanics. The language of enthusiastic critics and amateurs in our own day in speaking of art and artists would have seemed to a contemporary of Pheidias or Ictinus silly talk. They were too familiar with the best

⁷⁸ καίτοι δόξειεν ἂν εἶναι καὶ ὥς δεῖ χαίρειν καὶ τούτοις. 1118, a 5.

⁷⁹ τοὺς γὰρ ὑπερβεβλημένως χαίροντας μέλειν ἢ ὑποκρίσει οὐθεὶς ἀκολάστους λέγει. 1118, a 7.

art to gush about it. Its function was to give pleasure, or as Pericles, speaking in the culminating period of Greek art, preferred to put it, "to drive out painful feelings;"⁸⁰ but to occupy the best part of one's time in gazing at sculptures, pictures, or buildings, still more to write books about them, still more to represent them as ennobling agencies for the education of mankind, would have seemed nonsense to an educated Athenian of the fifth or fourth century. To admire art is not vicious; it is a permissible relaxation; it relieves moodiness and low spirits,—so Aristotle and Pericles seem to have thought, but their admiration did not go much farther. To Plato the imitative arts were, one and all, an abomination.

"To return to the subject of self-control; the intellectual senses of sight and hearing having been eliminated, there remains that of smell. This sense may or may not come within the field assigned to self-control according to circumstances. If it is so associated with the objects on which self-control is exercised as to raise the desire of them, it is not to be distinguished from those objects, and the same might be said of the intellectual sense of sight. A hungry boy staring into a cook-shop window, feasting his eyes on the dishes and sniffing their odour, may indulge himself almost as immoderately (in imagination at least) as if he sat at table with the dishes before him."⁸¹

⁸⁰ ὣν καθ' ἡμέραν ἡ τέρψις τὸ λυπηρὸν ἐκπλήσσει. Thucyd. ii. 38.

⁸¹ ἴδοι δ' ἂν τις καὶ τοὺς ἄλλους, ὅταν πεινῶσι, χαίροντας ταῖς τῶν βρωμάτων ὀσμαῖς· τὸ δὲ τοιούτοις χαίρειν ἀκολάστου. 1118, a 13.

But self-indulgence is not a proper term to apply to the man who exercises a critical taste in what he eats or drinks; the nice discrimination of flavours, a correct judgment of the character and age of wine, require gifts which raise the man who is fortunate enough to possess them to the level of a lover of the beautiful. Moreover it is quality, not quantity, which he cares about. "But subtract this element of intelligent appreciation from the case, and suppose no higher feeling than the filling of a void—feeding and not dining,—appetite then loses its intellectual character and, sinking to the level of pure physical desire, becomes a matter of culpable self-indulgence. This is clearly observable in the case of wild animals. If a lion sees or hears a stag or wild goat or a flock of sheep, he is pleased, but not in the way in which an artist is pleased; they are not to him an agreeable feature in the landscape; he rejoices merely because he sees his way to a meal.⁸² This is an adventitious and accidental use of the nobler senses, distinctive only of the lower animals, or of men who resemble them. Abstraction made of the four senses of sight, hearing, smell and taste, there only remains the sense of touch,—the sense which has the most extensive range in life and belongs to us in virtue of our purely animal nature."⁸³ In Aristotle's biological system the possession of this sense marks the line of division between vegetal and animal life. We see in the scheme of nature first, unorganised and lifeless matter, then things which live in the sense that they grow, and lastly things which grow

⁸² οὐδ' ὁ λέων τῇ φωνῇ τοῦ βοῦς ἀλλὰ τῇ ἐδωδῇ [χαίρει]—
ὁμοίως δ' οὐδ' ἰδὼν ἔλαφον ἢ ἄγριον αἶγα, ἀλλ' ὅτι βορὰν
ἔξει. 1118, a 20.

⁸³ κοινοτάτη δὴ τῶν αἰσθήσεων. 1118, b 1.

and also possess special senses. Of these special senses the one which first emerges as we pass from vegetal to animal life is touch—"the sense of food."⁸⁴ All animals, even the most rudimentary, such as molluscs, possess this sense at least, and they are enabled by it to make distinctions between injurious or non-profitable objects and their contraries. In more highly organised animals taste, which is a kind of touch, enables animals to make the farther discriminations which their organisation requires between objects which will or will not serve for food, giving a kind of seasoning."⁸⁵ That is the broad distinction drawn in his physical works. Here he contents himself with pointing out that its immediate purpose is to supply a want of which the organism is conscious,⁸⁶ and that it does this by means of the pleasure which contact affords, not to the body as a whole, but to certain portions of it.⁸⁷ This being its function, the right exercise of it is limited by the physical needs of the body; such things, and so much of those things, as contribute to health and strength, may be enjoyed, and to enjoy them with due regard to one's means and with the restrictions which the

⁸⁴ ἡ γὰρ ἀφὴ τῆς τροφῆς αἴσθησις. De Anima ii. 3. 414, b 7.

⁸⁵ ὁ δὲ χυμὸς οἶον ἡδυσμά τι τούτων ἐστίν. διασαφητέον δὲ περὶ αὐτῶν ὕστερον, νῦν δὲ ἐπὶ τοσοῦτον εἰρήσθω, ὅτι τῶν ζώων τοῖς ἔχουσιν ἀφὴν καὶ ὄρεξις ὑπάρχει. De Anima ii. 3, 414, b 13. τοῖς δὲ ζώοις, ἧ μὲν ζῶον ἕκαστον, ἀνάγκη ὑπάρχειν αἰσθῆσιν· τούτῳ γὰρ τὸ ζῶον εἶναι καὶ μὴ ζῶον διορίζομεν. De Sensu 1. 436, b 10.

⁸⁶ ἀναπλήρωσις γὰρ τῆς ἐνδείας ἡ φυσικὴ ἐπιθυμία. 1118, b 18.

⁸⁷ οὐ γὰρ περὶ πᾶν τὸ σῶμα ἡ τοῦ ἀκολάστου ἀφή, ἀλλὰ περὶ τινα μέρος. 1118, b 7.

judgment of society imposes is self-restraint.⁸⁸ Usually Aristotle remarks, men only err in one direction, that of over-enjoyment,⁸⁹ hence there is no word for the intemperance of under-enjoyment. But to take too little is as well a defect, although probably a less serious and certainly a less common one, as to take too much. The man who injures his health by fasting is nearly as reprehensible as the man who does so by over-indulgence; society does not blame him so much because the tendency is the other way, and the discouragement is not so much required. Our language in regard to conduct is always governed by facts rather than reasons; a railway train which is five minutes early is as unpunctual as one which is five minutes late, but we do not say so, because it scarcely ever happens—οὐ τέτευχε δ' ὀνόματος διὰ τὸ μὴ πάνυ γίνεσθαι.

But Aristotle does not allow the sense of touch to be a proper subject of self-control unless it serves the lower and absolutely necessary needs of the body. The more refined pleasures of touch, warm baths and friction after gymnastic exercise, things that animals and uncivilised men do not indulge in, are excluded; it is only certain parts of the body that lend themselves to over-indulgence.⁹⁰ Even the desires so called forth

⁸⁸ ὅσα δὲ πρὸς ὑγιείαν ἐστὶν ἢ πρὸς εὐεξίαν ἡδέα ὄντα, τούτων ὀρέσσεται [ὁ σώφρων] μετρίως καὶ ὡς δεῖ, καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἡδέων μὴ ἐμποδίων τούτοις ὄντων ἢ παρὰ τὸ καλὸν ἢ ὑπὲρ τὴν οὐσίαν. 1119, a 16.

⁸⁹ ἐν μὲν οὖν ταῖς φυσικαῖς ἐπιθυμίαις ὀλίγοι ἀμαρτάνουσιν καὶ ἐφ' ἓν, ἐπὶ τὸ πλεῖον. 1118, b 15.

⁹⁰ καὶ γὰρ αἱ ἐλευθεριώταται τῶν διὰ τῆς ἀφῆς ἡδονῶν ἀφῆρρηται, οἷον αἱ ἐν τοῖς γυμνασίοις διὰ τρίψεως καὶ τῆς θερμασίας γινόμεναι· οὐ γὰρ περὶ πᾶν τὸ σῶμα ἡ τοῦ ἀκολάστου ἀφῆς, ἀλλὰ περὶ τινα μέρη. 1118, b 4.

require to be distinguished; some are universal, like the craving for food as such, and some are personal and acquired, like the taste for food of a particular kind or prepared in a way to suit individual liking.⁹¹ Over-indulgence in the desire of food as such is considered by Aristotle to be rare, and confined to the one mistake of taking too much, for to eat or drink anything without discriminating its nature or quality and merely for the sake of ingesting something is unnatural, and a defect which none but the lowest natures would be capable of. Aristotle treats this as outside the scope of his inquiry.⁹² In the virtues of conduct we are not concerned with extraordinary deflections from the usual standard, either in the direction of ideal goodness or of unusual vice.⁹³ That has already been pointed out in regard to courage. Absolute morality, the complete goodness which the Lacedæmonians expressed by the phrase "A godlike man,"⁹⁴ equally with the vices of disease, barbarism, or the action of brutalised men, is not within the field covered by Aristotle's discussion on conduct; he is thinking only of things as they usually are. For this reason he puts aside here, and subsequently in the seventh book, the grossest forms of self-indulgence, and considers only those which are commonly met with and which depend on individual proclivities. Self-indulgence so limited may be either

⁹¹ τῶν δ' ἐπιθυμιῶν αἱ μὲν κοιναὶ δοκοῦσιν εἶναι, αἱ δ' ἴδιοι καὶ ἐπίθετοι κτέ. 1118, b 8.

⁹² τὸ γὰρ ἐσθίειν τὰ τύχοντα ἕως ἂν ὑπερπλησθῇ, ὑπερβάλ-
λειν ἐστὶ τὸ κατὰ τὴν φύσιν τῷ πλήθει· ἀναπλήρωσις γὰρ τῆς
ἐνδείας ἢ φυσικὴ ἐπιθυμία. 1118, b 16.

⁹³ καὶ γὰρ ὥσπερ οὐδὲ θηρίου ἐστὶ κακία οὐδ' ἀρετή, οὕτως
οὐδὲ θεοῦ. 1145, a 25.

⁹⁴ 1145, a 29.

in the things desired, or in the degree in which they are indulged in—excessive, being as Aristotle is careful to point out, “that which is more than usual”⁹⁵ either in amount or in the mode of enjoyment; many are the opportunities of error, and the self-indulgent man is not slow to avail himself of them.⁹⁶

The practical necessity of guarding against those departures from the standard which are most usual has led Aristotle in these chapters to dwell on self-indulgence rather than on self-restraint, as for the same reason he has described courage more fully than cowardice. He does not here consider whether a man indulges himself of set purpose, or whether he yields to the pleasure of the moment because he is not strong enough to resist; he reserves these questions for subsequent treatment in the discussion of self-mastery in Book VII. Self-control is looked at as the contrary of self-indulgence; the man who has it does not take pleasure in what gratifies the self-indulgent man, but on the contrary dislikes it, nor does he yield to any of the multiform excesses which distinguish such an one; his pleasures are confined to the satisfaction of simple and necessary physical wants within the limits of health and strength and the bounds of his pecuniary means. Equally he avoids the opposite extremes of self-privation and asceticism—assuming them to be carried to a point injurious to vigorous life; good sense and reason is his rule.⁹⁷

CHAPTER 12.—Self-indulgence is said to be a greater fault than cowardice, for there is less difficulty in resisting

⁹⁵ τὸ μᾶλλον ἢ ὥς οἱ πολλοί. 1118, b 23.

⁹⁶ κατὰ πάντα δ' οἱ ἀκόλαστοι ὑπερβάλλουσιν. 1118, b 24.

⁹⁷ 1119, a 16–20.

the attraction of pleasure than in bearing pain, which, at least when severe, alters the physical nature and throws it off its balance.⁹⁸ By way of emphasising the difference between cowardice and self-indulgence, Aristotle draws a distinction between them more ingenious than real: "The habit of cowardice is not so voluntary as the acts which go to make a coward; the habit is unattended with pain, but the acts, such as throwing away your arms, are only done under the disturbing influence of pain—they seem forced on you. On the other hand, the acts which produce the habit of self-indulgence are voluntary, being indeed things which one keenly desires to do, but not so the habit itself; no one wishes to be self-indulgent."⁹⁹ This passage is not consistent with what we have been told about voluntary action in the first chapter of the present book. "Wherever the cause of action is in the agent and he knows the circumstances in which he is acting, his act is voluntary."¹⁰⁰ A distinction is here drawn between more and less voluntary action, which is doubtful, to say the least, as a matter of fact, and of which no hint has been given in the long chapter dealing with the subject. Moreover, one may ask whether a person is not quite as unwilling to be called a coward as to incur the reproach of self-indulgence? Aristotle

⁹⁸ ἡ μὲν λύπη ἐξίστησι καὶ φθείρει τὴν τοῦ ἔχοντος φύσιν, ἡ δὲ ἡδονὴ οὐδὲν τοιοῦτο ποιεῖ. 1119, a 23.

⁹⁹ δόξειε δ' ἂν οὐκ ὁμοίως ἐκούσιον ἢ δειλία εἶναι τοῖς καθ' ἕκαστον· αὐτὴ μὲν γὰρ ἄλυπος, ταῦτα δὲ διὰ λύπην ἐξίστησιν, ὥστε καὶ τὰ ὅπλα ρίπτειν καὶ τᾶλλα ἀσχημονεῖν· διὸ καὶ δοκεῖ βίαια εἶναι. τῷ δ' ἀκολάστῳ ἀνάπαλιν τὰ μὲν καθ' ἕκαστα ἐκούσια (ἐπιθυμοῦντι γὰρ καὶ ὀρεγομένῳ), τὸ δ' ὄλον ἦττον· οὐθεὶς γὰρ ἐπιθυμεῖ ἀκόλαστος εἶναι. 1119, a 27.

¹⁰⁰ 1111, a 22.

is probably right in indicating self-indulgence as the more subtle and dangerous of the two excesses; "if it is not kept in check it will know no bounds, for the desire of pleasure is insatiable and comes from all kinds of quarters to those who are not blessed with good sense." ¹⁰¹

"That part of our nature which is the seat of desire requires, therefore, to be under the rule and guidance of reason, just as boys are made to obey their tutors." ¹⁰²

Aristotle's chapters on courage and self-control amount to an assertion of the superiority of power over endurance as the basis of moral character; the active and the passive qualities correspond in his ethical scheme to form and matter in his psychological scheme; each is a *sine quâ non*, but doing and not suffering constitutes the excellence of man. ¹⁰³

Self-control is the negative, resisting side of those powerful impulses on whose exercise life depends; the

¹⁰¹ εἰ οὖν μὴ ἔσται εὐπειθὲς καὶ ὑπὸ τὸ ἄρχον, ἐπὶ πολὺ ἥξει· ἄπληστος γὰρ ἡ τοῦ ἡδέος ὀρεξις καὶ πανταχόθεν τῷ ἀνοήτῳ. 1119, b 7.

¹⁰² 1119, b 13. The simile of boys under the guidance of their tutors (which does not appeal very forcibly to us) would have seemed apposite enough to an Athenian. Boys of good family were not allowed to go out without their leader or tutor (generally a slave), and they were expected to obey him. There are many references to this in Plato, and a striking one in the *Lysis*.

¹⁰³ τῆς γὰρ ἀρετῆς μᾶλλον τὸ εὖ ποιεῖν ἢ τὸ εὖ πάσχειν, καὶ τὰ καλὰ πράττειν μᾶλλον ἢ τὰ αἰσχρὰ μὴ πράττειν. 1120, a 11.

tendency "to be unmoved by passion"¹⁰⁴ answers to anger as self-control does to desire, and, therefore, although in the genetic order the impulses regulated by self-control are prior to those regulated by courage and should therefore come first, Aristotle, viewing human nature in the *Ethics* critically as an already constituted whole, was acting on his own principles in giving to courage the leading place.

Modern readers of the *Ethics* are disposed to complain of Aristotle's definition of courage on the ground that it exalts military virtue and finds little or no place for moral courage. This is true, but he provides a counterpoise in what he says as to the necessity of keeping your temper,¹⁰⁵ and also by insisting on rational deliberation and an adequate object as essential to courage. Here as elsewhere the end crowns the work, and the end is the integrity of the individual and of the state. Self-defence and the maintenance of the inviolability of the state territory are the limits within which courage is properly contained. A war of unprovoked aggression would offer no field for this virtue. How Aristotle would have dealt with the question "What aggression is unprovoked?" in the complicated struggles of modern states under the influence of the countless motives which actuate them, we cannot say. He might have thought that there was no justification for the Crusades, and we may think that there was some justification for the Persian War.

¹⁰⁴ 1125, b 33.

¹⁰⁵ 1125, b 26 sqq.

CHAPTER V

Book IV.

SPECIAL KINDS OF GOOD CONDUCT (continued)

CONDUCT WITH REGARD TO WEALTH AND
HONOUR ; CONDUCT IN SOCIETY.

οὐ χεῖρον δὲ καὶ τὰς τοιαύτας ἐπελθεῖν · μᾶλλον τε γὰρ ἂν εἰδείημεν τὰ περὶ τὸ ἥθος, καθ' ἕκαστον διελθόντες, καὶ μεσότητας εἶναι τὰς ἀρετὰς πιστεύσαιμεν ἂν, ἐπὶ πάντων οὕτως ἔχον συνιδόντες. Eth. 4. 7. 1126, a 14.

THE conduct reviewed in this book falls into two main divisions, conduct in public life and in private society: the former comprising the right use of wealth, magnificence, magnanimity, and proper spirit, and the latter friendliness, straightforwardness, social tact, and modesty of demeanour.¹ It may be assumed that neither these names nor any which can be substituted for them give the exact meaning intended to be conveyed by Aristotle. No word which describes a type of character retains its meaning for long, because the character it describes soon changes with the changes of national and social life, and as the same process takes place in any language into which the original may be transferred there is a double liability to error, and the correspondence of the word and the thing can never be more than approximate, sometimes with wide variations.

The object of the description of the kinds of conduct reviewed in this book is clearly stated. It is to show that good conduct in general is a mean state by proving even the slighter kinds to be so.² But Aristotle could

¹ Right use of wealth (ἐλευθεριότης); magnificence (μεγαλοπρέπεια); magnanimity (μεγαλοψυχία); proper spirit (πραότης); friendliness (φιλία); straightforwardness (ἀλήθεια); social tact (εὐτραπεία); modesty of demeanour (αἰδώς).

² οὐ χεῖρον δὲ καὶ τὰς τοιαύτας ἐπελθεῖν· μάλλον τε γὰρ ἂν εἰδείημεν τὰ περὶ τὸ ἦθος, καθ' ἕκαστον διελθόντες, καὶ

never have intended to examine all cases of conduct, because it would have been an impossible task. He took certain selected instances out of a wide field, and was content to rest his case on them. His selection was not made at haphazard. Courage and temperance claim the first place for reasons already given; then he remembers that wealth and honour are considered by many to be supreme ends of conduct, and although this is a wrong view, it is not the less true that it is acted upon, and that these motives influence a large, and perhaps the largest part of conduct as a whole. But life is not confined to endeavouring to achieve distinction or make money; the claims of society and of necessary relaxation have to be satisfied: conduct in these matters is therefore considered, and forms the subject of this book. Conduct with regard to wealth and honour may conveniently be distinguished as conduct in public social life, and the remaining kinds as conduct in private social life.

μεσότητος εἶναι τὰς ἀρετὰς πιστεύομεν ἄν, ἐπὶ πάντων οὕτως ἔχον συνιδόντες. 1127, a 14. Although these words introduce the account of straightforward conduct only, their application is not limited to that case; "Even conduct in private life is worth attention"—οὐ χεῖρον καὶ τὰς τοιαύτας ἐπελθεῖν—a *fortiori*, will conduct in public life be so?

TEXT

CHAPTER 1.—Of the good qualities shown in public social life, the first to be examined is the right use of wealth. “Wealth is everything which has a money value, including money itself,³ and its proper use includes as well acquisition as expenditure, although it is chiefly shown in expenditure.”

Our word “liberality,” which points to the spending side only, does not express Aristotle’s full meaning, although for convenience it must sometimes be employed.

³ When things having a value of their own are used for currency they are still, with respect to that value, wealth, and their intrinsic value being variable affects their value as media of exchange. Aristotle knew this (1133, b 13), although the ancient world in general did not. Aspasius commenting on the text, unnecessarily amends Aristotle’s definition through a misapprehension on the point. *δοκεῖ δὲ μὴ πάνυ ἱκανῶς ἀποδεδόσθαι ὁ τῶν οὕτω λεγομένων χρημάτων ὀρισμός· τὸ γὰρ νόμισμα αὐτὸ καὶ τὸ ἀργύριον οὐ μετρεῖται νομισματι. σχέδον οὖν ὁ ἐντελής ὀρισμός οὗτός ἐστι· χρῆμα ὃ ἢ νόμισμά ἐστιν ἢ οὗ ἢ ἀξία νομισματι μετρεῖται.* Aristotle had said “Wealth is everything whose value is measured by money” (1119, b 26); in his discussion on currency in Book V., Chap. 5, he notes that money itself, varies in value. Aspasius denies this, and says that money is not measured by money.

In civilised society, behaviour with regard to getting and giving or otherwise disposing of things of money value constitutes a very large part of conduct in general,⁴ whilst "politically, well adjusted fiscal regulations are essential to stability and well-being, and occupy a large share of the wise legislator's attention."⁵ These considerations serve to explain the great and apparently disproportionate length at which the subject of wealth is treated.

Liberality being "moderation in the acquisition and disposal of wealth, or rather in its disposal,"⁶ the extremes which mark its abuse are extravagance and stinginess, and it is to be noted that each of these extremes is capable of abuse in two directions; the stingy man shows his illiberality in grasping as well as in not parting with money, and the spendthrift is sometimes as careless about his receipts as his expenditure. There is, however, this difference between them, that in common language stinginess (or illiberality) is always confined to its proper subject, wealth, whilst the word 'spendthrift' is often used with an implication that the money is spent on vicious indulgence; this is unfair to the spendthrift, who is not necessarily bad in more directions than one."⁷

"Right conduct with respect to wealth lies, however, more on the positive, active side of giving than on the

⁴ διατείνει ἐπὶ πολὺ. 1121, b 16.

⁵ δοκεῖ γάρ τισι τὸ περὶ τὰς οὐσίας εἶναι μέγιστον τετάχῃαι καλῶς· περὶ γὰρ τούτων ποιεῖσθαι φασὶ τὰς στάσεις πάντας. Polit. ii. 7. 1266, a 36.

⁶ 1119, b 23-25.

⁷ τὴν δ' ἀσωτίαν ἐπιφέρομεν ἐνιότε συμπλέκοντες· τοὺς γὰρ ἀκρατεῖς καὶ εἰς ἀκολασίαν δαπανήρους ἀσώτους καλοῦμεν—οὐ δὴ οἰκείως προσαγορεύονται. βούλεται γὰρ ἄσωτος εἶναι ὁ ἐν κακὸν ἔχων, τὸ φθείρειν τὴν οὐσίαν. 1119, b 30.

negative side of receiving,⁸ and this whether the rightness be shown in receiving from proper sources or in declining to receive from improper ones." Aristotle considers every form of receiving to be passive, whereas the grand characteristic of virtue is action. Moreover, "it is easier," he thinks, "not to take than to give: mankind being in general less disposed to give away what belongs to themselves than not to take what belongs to others."⁹ "The liberal man, moreover, gets more thanks and praise, being of all good people the most liked."¹⁰ He must of course give in the right way and for worthy objects in order to deserve his popularity, and if he does this he will find pleasure in giving—pleasure being the accompaniment of all virtuous action, hence those who part with their money grudgingly are not entitled to the name of liberal.¹¹ To those who know how to use it wealth is not valued for itself, but in order that it may be given away; they do not beg; their proper moneys are the source of their income, and of these moneys they will be careful, so as not to starve their virtuous action; they will be circumspect in giving, so that they make the best use of their means."¹²

On these sections (1120, a 15–27) we notice how greatly praise and the good opinion of society are relied on as

⁸ Receiving is negative, because Aristotle is assuming the moral agent to live on his means and not to make money by business or manual labour. The "working man" is not a moral agent.

⁹ τὸ γὰρ οἰκεῖον ἥττον προίενται μᾶλλον ἢ οὐ λαμβάνουσι τὸ ἀλλότριον. 1120, a 17.

¹⁰ φιλοῦνται δὲ σχεδὸν μάλιστα οἱ ἐλευθέριοι τῶν ἀπ' ἀρετῆς. 1120, a 21.

¹¹ 1120, a 26.

¹² οὐδὲ τοῖς τυχοῦσι δώσει [ὁ ἐλευθέριος] ἵνα ἔχῃ διδόναι οἷς δεῖ καὶ ὅτε καὶ οὗ καλόν. 1120, b 3.

tests of conduct, and also the assumption that conduct which satisfies these tests brings its own reward in the form of pleasure. We must take Aristotle's word for it that getting money is a negative and passive process; but this is not a modern experience, and against it may be set Bacon's remark that it is as hard to be rich as to be virtuous.¹³ Another difference between the ancient and modern world appears in the statement that liberal persons are not in the habit of begging; that liberal persons do not ask for themselves is true, but they are usually the most persistent and successful beggars for others; people who give themselves being naturally the most interested in the objects they support, and the claims of charity being inexhaustible. Aristotle notices that the merit of liberality on its spending side does not depend on the amount expended, but on the proportion it bears to the means of the giver. "It may well be that the man who gives less than another is the more liberal of the two, if he gives from a smaller fund."¹⁴ "As a rule, those who inherit property are more free-handed than those who make their money themselves: they do not know what want is, and their fortune not being their own creation they are not tempted to overvalue it, like parents and poets; men of this stamp will obviously not grow rich." "A generous man is easy to have to do with in money matters; it is always possible to get the better of him;¹⁵ he would rather give where he ought

¹³ "The things required to procure fortune are not fewer or less difficult than those to procure virtue." Bacon, *Advancement*, viii. c. 2.

¹⁴ οὐθέν δὴ κωλύει ἐλευθεριώτερον εἶναι τὸν τὰ ἐλάττω διδόντα, ἐὰν ἀπ' ἐλαττόνων διδῶ. 1120, b 9.

¹⁵ καὶ εὐκοινώνητος δ' ἐστὶν ὁ ἐλευθέριος εἰς χρήματα δύναται γὰρ ἀδικεῖσθαι, μὴ τιμῶν γε τὰ χρήματα. 1121, a 4.

not, than not give where he ought; he makes a good use of his wealth according to his means, and is careful not to draw his funds from a tainted or corrupted source."

Stinginess and extravagance contrast at all points with this: the fault of the niggardly man is giving too little and getting too much; the extravagant man is just the opposite, but "his characteristic efforts are not commonly conjoined—at least for long: it is not easy to be perpetually giving unless he looks after his income.¹⁶ A private fortune is soon run through in such circumstances, and it is only of private persons and limited fortunes that we are thinking when we use the words "stingy" and "extravagant." Despots and others with practically unlimited means at command must be criticised from a different point of view.¹⁷ The spendthrift is a better man by far than the niggard; his faults are on the right side, and they are remediable: age and want will bring him to his senses.¹⁸ But age and want only increase the original defects of the penurious man, who is practically incurable.¹⁹ Moreover there is much to admire in a free-handed, generous disposition: the man is perhaps foolish, but he is not unamiable.²⁰

¹⁶ τὰ μὲν οὖν τῆς ἀσωτίας οὐ πάνυ συνδνάζεται· οὐ γὰρ ῥάδιον μηδαμόθεν λαμβάνοντα πᾶσι διδόναι. 1121, a 16.

¹⁷ τοὺς γὰρ τὰ μεγάλα μὴ ὄθεν δὲ δεῖ λαμβάνοντας, μήδε ἂ δεῖ, οὐ λέγομεν ἀνελευθέρους, οἷον τοὺς τυράννους πόλεις πορθοῦντας καὶ ἱερὰ συλῶντας, ἀλλὰ πονηροὺς μᾶλλον καὶ ἀσεβεῖς— 1122, a 3.

¹⁸ εὐιάτος τε γάρ ἐστι καὶ ὑπὸ τῆς ἡλικίας καὶ ὑπὸ τῆς ἀπορίας. 1121, a 20.

¹⁹ ἢ δ' ἀνελευθερία ἀνιάτος ἐστιν. 1121, b 12.

²⁰ διὸ καὶ δοκεῖ οὐκ εἶναι φαῦλος τὸ ἥθος· οὐ γὰρ μοχθηροῦ οὐδ' ἀγεννοῦς τὸ ὑπερβάλλειν διδόντα καὶ μὴ λαμβάνοντα, ἡλιθίου δέ. 1121, a 25.

"Many spendthrifts are obliged to supply their wants in a way of which the moralist must disapprove; they go to money-lenders or sell their family portraits.²¹ Nor are their benevolences really liberal, for they give to the ministers of their pleasure, and as a matter of fact often become thoroughly depraved in their tastes. Without guidance this is likely to be their fate, but should they chance to be looked after, they will not improbably turn out well;²² their disposition is at bottom not bad."

"Stinginess in its complete form consists, as has been said, in excessive getting and defective giving, but in practice it is very often not complete, and we see men who hoard without coveting their neighbours' goods. Two different motives operate to produce this—a genuine indisposition to do wrong, and a fear of consequences; they think that if they were to lay hands on what belongs to others, others might do the like by them, so they indulge their taste for acquisitiveness by the safe course of neither giving nor getting."²³ "Stinginess in the shape of avarice generally shows itself in low forms of making money, such as lending out small sums at a high rate of interest,²⁴ or in engaging in occupations which are not fit for gentlemen. The true opposite of right conduct as to wealth is stinginess and avarice, not extra-

²¹ ἀναγκάζονται οὖν ἑτέρωθεν πορίζειν. 1121, a 34.

²² τυχῶν δ' ἐπιμελείας εἰς τὸ μέσον καὶ εἰς τὸ δέον ἀφίκοιτ' ἄν. 1121, b 11.

²³ οἳ μὲν διὰ τινα ἐπιείκειαν καὶ εὐλάβειαν τῶν αἰσχυρῶν—οἳ δ' αὖ διὰ φόβον ἀπέχονται τῶν ἀλλοτρίων ὥς οὐ ῥάδιον αὐτὸν μὲν τὰ ἑτέρων λαμβάνειν, τὰ δ' αὐτοῦ ἑτέρους μῆ. 1121, b 24.

²⁴ τοκισταὶ κατὰ μικρὰ καὶ ἐπὶ πολλῶν. 1121, b 34.

vagance; not only are these two vices worse in themselves, but the general tendency of conduct is more in their direction.”

CHAPTER 2.—“The subject of magnificence naturally follows: it is also conduct with respect to wealth, but it is confined to the case of expenditure—expenditure, too, on a much larger scale than any we have been considering; it may be defined as “lavish expenditure within the limits of good taste.”²⁵ “Size is, however, a relative expression and so is good taste; what is becoming depends on the person who spends and on the circumstances and object of the expenditure.²⁶ ‘To give to a tramp,’ like Odysseus, may be kind, but it cannot possibly be magnificent, however appropriate in every respect the gift may be.²⁷ The errors here are, on the side of defect, want of proportion, and a desire to do things cheaply (*μικροπρέπεια*), and on the side of excess, vulgar and tasteless ostentation (*ἀπειροκαλία*); the magnificent man avoids both, ‘he spends like one who knows.’²⁸ Also he spends habitually and on principle—habit is determined by the nature of its constituent acts and by the objects of those acts.²⁹ The habit of magnificence accordingly consists in a large and becoming expenditure

²⁵ ἐν μεγέθει πρέπουσα δαπάνη ἐστίν. 1122, a 23.

²⁶ τὸ δὲ μέγεθος πρὸς τι· οὐ γὰρ τὸ αὐτὸ δαπάνημα τριηράρχῳ καὶ ἀρχιθεωρῇ. τὸ πρέπον δὴ πρὸς αὐτόν, καὶ ἐν ᾧ καὶ περὶ ὅ. 1122, a 24.

²⁷ ὁ δ’ ἐν μικροῖς ἢ ἐν μετρίοις κατ’ ἀξίαν δαπανῶν οὐ λέγεται μεγαλοπρεπής, οἷον τὸ “πολλάκι δόσκον ἀλήτη.” 1122, a 26.

²⁸ ἐπιστήμονι ἔοικεν. 1122, a 34.

²⁹ ἡ ἕξις ταῖς ἐνεργείαις ὀρίζεται, καὶ ὧν ἐστίν. 1122, b 1.

resulting in a work which answers to it; there must of course be the motive found in all good conduct—the motive of doing the thing well.³⁰ The value of the expenditure of a man who knows how to spend is not measured by a money standard; taste, skill, and proportion count for infinitely more than material value.”

“The objects which the magnificent man chiefly selects for the exercise of his gifts are those to which honour is specifically attached, offerings and sacrifices to the gods and to the whole world of spirits, and services of a friendly and honourable kind to the state,³¹ such as public banquets or the discharge of the duties of Trierarch or Ambassador on a brilliant scale. In all these cases we refer to the man who undertakes the duties, to his means, and to the duties themselves, which ought all to be proportionate to each other. Hence a poor man cannot be magnificent, and he would be foolish to attempt it.”

“Public duties and benefactions do not, however, exhaust the opportunities of spending on a grand scale. Private life may once in a way claim the attention of the millionaire—a marriage or some occasion of the sort,³² the reception and entertainment of a private or public guest, or the building and furnishing of his own house in a manner suitable to his fortune and position; here he will aim at something solid and enduring—‘the

³⁰ δαπανήσει δὲ τὰ τοιαῦτα ὁ μεγαλοπρεπὴς τοῦ καλοῦ ἕνεκα κοινὸν γὰρ τοῦτο ταῖς ἀρεταῖς. 1122, b 6.

³¹ ἔστι δὲ τῶν δαπανημάτων οἷα λέγομεν τὰ τίμια (1101, b 10 sqq.) οἷον τὰ περὶ θεοῦς, ἀναθήματα καὶ κατασκευαὶ καὶ θυσαίαι, ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ περὶ πᾶν τὸ δαιμόνιον, καὶ ὅσα πρὸς τὸ κοινὸν εὐφιλοτιμήτᾳ ἐστίν. 1122, b 19.

³² τῶν δὲ ἰδίων ὅσα εἰσάπαξ γίνεται, οἷον γάμος καὶ εἴ τι τοιοῦτον. 1122, b 35.

things which last longest are the most beautiful,' remarks Aristotle.³³ In whatever is done, design and ornament must be subordinate to the purpose of the work—you must not treat a shrine as you would a mortuary tablet.³⁴ "The aim of the magnificent man in whatever he does, great or small, is to do it as well as it can possibly be done appropriately." In these words Aristotle sums up the character.³⁵ Extravagant and misplaced expenditure is purely vulgar. A vulgar man ³⁶ wants to show off his wealth, being under the impression that his money will bring him credit, and "he generally does it badly, spending much on trivial or secondary objects without any sense of harmonious proportion, as, for example, entertaining his club companions on the scale of a wedding feast." ³⁷ In the other direction, to make a cheap show, and even then to grudge the money, is as bad or worse. Although this defect is not wholly unknown, we have no word for it. "These habits," says

33 ὅσα πολυχρόνια τῶν ἔργων, κάλλιστα γὰρ ταῦτα—1123, a 8.

34 Nothing strikes a visitor to Athens more than the beauty, simplicity, and refinement of the mortuary tablets. To go from the Street of Tombs to Kensal Green is a lesson in taste.

35 ἐστὶ τοῦ μεγαλοπρεποῦς, ἐν ᾧ ἂν ποιῇ γένει, μεγαλοπρεπῶς ποιεῖν (τὸ γὰρ τοιοῦτον οὐκ εὐνυπερβλητον) καὶ ἔχον κατ' ἀξίαν τοῦ δαπανήματος. 1123, a 16.

36 ὁ δ' ὑπαρβάλλων καὶ βάνανσος. 1123, a 19. Aspasius says ἐλήλυθε δὲ τὸ ὄνομα ἀπὸ τῶν πρὸς πῦρ ἐργαζομένων· βαύνους γὰρ ἐκαλοῦν τὰς καμίνας, ἐντεῦθεν δὲ καὶ πάντας τοὺς χειροτέχνας βαναύσους ὠνόμασαν. Asp. 104. 22.

37 ἐν τοῖς μικροῖς τῶν δαπανημάτων πολλὰ ἀναλίσκει καὶ λαμπρύνεται παρὰ μέλος, οἶον ἐρανιστὰς γαικῶς ἐστιᾷν. 1123, a 20.

Aristotle, "are wrong, but they are not severely blamed, because they do no harm to one's neighbour, nor are they very bad form." ³⁸ It is the fact that they are blamed which makes them in any degree morally reprehensible.

The two chapters on the right use of wealth on the moderate and on the grand scale are carefully written and worked out, and it is evident that Aristotle attached considerable importance to the subject. To make the best use of money, neither squandering nor misapplying it, counts for much in a good life as he understood it. Whatever may be the scale of expenditure, proportion as an element of excellence is prominent. The man of moderate means must not pauperise himself either by giving or not receiving; one is as bad as the other. Vows of poverty, if kept, are inconsistent with a good life, for how can one who has nothing and who is ashamed to ask hold his place in the world and help his friends? To starve your means of action is as reprehensible as to reduce your bodily powers below the level of healthy efficiency. Although wealth honestly gotten is an advantage, it is not a necessity; a poor man or one of moderate means may be as liberal as any one else—it is a mere question of the relation between what he can do and what he actually does. The end, however, is more important than the means, and Aristotle has caught the true meaning of liberality in describing it as "giving for the pleasure of giving." An ungenerous man could scarcely have written this chapter. The

³⁸ εἰσὶ μὲν οὖν αἱ ἕξεις αὗται κακίαι, οὐ μὲν ὀνειδῆ γ' ἐπιφέρουσι διὰ τὸ μήτε βλαβεραὶ τῷ πέλας εἶναι μήτε λίαν ἀσχήμονες. 1123, a 31.

portrait of the spendthrift is excellently drawn, although his bad features are too much toned down; careless, extravagant, good-natured Charles Surface does more harm to society than Aristotle allows when he contrasts him with the saving illiberal man by saying that "he helps many, whilst the other helps no one, not even himself." The expenditure of the spendthrift is at the best unproductive, whilst savings prudently invested increase the national wealth.

The chapter on magnificence—the æsthetics of conduct—is interesting quite as much for what it omits as for what it contains. The question propounded is, "What is the best use which a very rich man can make of his money?" We learn that he ought to live in a style suitable to his fortune and position, and that public objects have a strong claim on his benevolent attention. Aristotle mentions the objects which were recognised by opinion in his time as proper for such expenditure; the discharge of the liturgies or public services which fell to citizens of means in the ordinary course, or which were voluntarily assumed by them, such as the furnishing a chorus for the plays, the maintenance and pay of those who were in training as competitors in the great athletic contests, feasting the tribes, the celebration of festivals and sacrifices and giving costly ornaments of a lasting kind to the temples. To expend large sums on these things both gratified the religious and artistic feelings of the Greek public and tended to the honour of the state, and was accordingly considered the mark of a generous and noble character. But although princely generosity for the benefit of the community is commendable, Aristotle was aware that it might be abused, and in the *Politics* he advises that in democratic states the desire of rich men to undertake expensive and useless services, such as providing choruses and torch races, should be

checked.³⁹ And although he was much alive to the dangers arising from poverty, he does not suggest public charity as a proper outlet for magnificent expenditure; a public banquet is permissible, a public soup kitchen certainly is not. Even the liberal man would not relieve poverty as such—he would give to the right people, but they would have to show some better claim than want.

To cure disease or alleviate physical suffering by erecting and endowing hospitals was a way in which neither Aristotle nor Plato would have encouraged a rich man to spend his money. Poor citizens who were too ill to be cured by the summary methods of the parish doctor ought not, according to those authorities, to be artificially kept alive. Even Hippocrates considered the treatment of patients quite overcome with sickness not to fall within the province of the medical art. Of vulgar ostentation and cheap magnificence Aristotle does not think it necessary to speak at length; he indicates types which are but too well known; bad art is disagreeable, but, as he says, it hurts nobody; it is bad form (*ἀσχημοσύνη*) and therefore *pro tanto* bad conduct, but not of a vicious type.

CHAPTER 3.—Magnificence, or the habit of doing things on a great scale in the matter of expenditure, leads to the consideration of a habit in which a lordly spirit is shown in another direction—namely in the pursuit of honour, “the greatest of external goods.”⁴⁰

³⁹ βέλτιον δὲ καὶ βουλομένους κωλύειν λειτουργεῖν τὰς δαπανηρὰς μὲν μὴ χρησίμους δὲ λειτουργίας, οἷον χορηγίας λαμπαδαρχίας καὶ ὅσαι ἄλλαι τοιαῦται. *Polit.* vii. (v.) 8. 1309, a 17.

⁴⁰ τὸ ἐπὶ τοῖς καλλίστοις ἄθλον· τοιοῦτον δ' ἡ τιμή· μέγιστον γὰρ δὴ τοῦτο τῶν ἐκτὸς ἀγαθῶν. 1123, b 19.

Aristotle embodies this habit concretely by describing one whom he calls "the magnanimous or the great-minded man." This character is defined shortly as "a man who values himself highly and with good reason,"⁴¹ and out of this general description his qualities are evolved. It is obvious that he must have sound sense—he must have the gift of seeing himself as others see him, for to form an exaggerated estimate of one's own merit is foolish, and whatsoever else he may be no good man is a fool.⁴² "If then," so Aristotle continues his argument, "his own opinion of his supereminent excellence is justified, he must be worth something considerable, and there is one thing and only one thing considerable enough to be the measure of his value, and that is honour—the greatest of external goods. He will therefore conduct himself as he ought in the matter of honour and dishonour."⁴³ Aristotle proceeds to show what is proper

⁴¹ δοκεῖ δὴ ὁ μεγαλόψυχος εἶναι ὁ μέγνων αὐτὸν ἀξιῶν ἄξιος ὢν. 1123, b 1.

⁴² ὁ γὰρ μὴ κατ' ἀξίαν αὐτὸ ποιῶν ἡλίθιος, τῶν δὲ κατ' ἀρετὴν οὐδεὶς ἡλίθιος οὐδ' ἀνόητος. 1123, b 2.

⁴³ Aristotle's repeated statement that the object of the magnanimous man is honour (see 1124, a 4 and 12) surprises Aspasius, τίς οὖν αὐτῷ σκοπός; οὐ μὰ Δία τὸ τιμᾶσθαι· εἴη γὰρ ἂν οὕτως ἐπ' ἄλλοις, ἀλλὰ τὸ παρέχειν ἑαυτὸν ἄξιον ὑπὸ τῶν σπουδαίων τιμᾶσθαι καὶ συνειδέναι ἑαυτῷ ἀρίστῳ καὶ ἀξίῳ τῆς παρὰ τῶν ἀγαθῶν τιμῆς καὶ σπουδῆς. Aspasius 109. 6. But the great-minded man lives in society, and although honour is not the *summum bonum*, it is in the opinion of accomplished men of the world an adequate end of social life. (οἱ δὲ χαρίεντες καὶ πρακτικοὶ τιμὴν τοῦ γὰρ πολιτικοῦ βίου σχεδὸν τοῦτο τέλος. 1095, b 22.) Aristotle in these books is not dealing with happiness in its highest, but in its secondary form, and (δευτέρως δ' ὁ κατὰ τὴν

conduct for a highly placed man with a due, but not over-due sense of his own merit, who lives up to his own conception of honour and to whom dishonour is the thing of all others to be avoided. Having elected to describe a man rather than a bundle of attributes, he sketches his appearance and demeanour; "his movements are slow, his voice is a deep bass, his manner of speech deliberate."⁴⁴ He never gets excited or hurries himself or speaks in a high key; these are signs of caring about petty things. A man so formed and endowed, and whose mistress is honour, cannot belong to the humble or middle class or earn his livelihood by commerce or labour; he must be well-born, powerful and rich, advantages always winning respect,⁴⁵ but which he values only on that account. His actions are on a large scale, reminding us of physical beauty, to which size is essential.⁴⁶ Jealous of superiority in others, he avoids

ἄλλην ἀρετὴν [εὐδαίμων]. 1178, a 9) so far as it is attainable by the virtues of conduct, and of that form honour is an end. It is not *the* end of conduct, but it is an end always highly spoken of; it is one of the many shapes of that indefinite attribute called τὸ καλόν. It is "the prize of virtue and attributed to good men." 1123, b 35.

⁴⁴ καὶ κίνησις δὲ βραδεῖα τοῦ μεγαλοψύχου δοκεῖ εἶναι, καὶ φωνὴ βαρεῖα, καὶ λέξεις στάσιμος. 1125, a 12.

⁴⁵ αἱ γὰρ δυναστεῖαι καὶ ὁ πλοῦτος διὰ τὴν τιμὴν ἐστὶν αἰρετά—ὧ δὲ καὶ ἡ τιμὴ μικρόν ἐστι, τούτῳ καὶ τᾶλλα. 1124, a 17.

⁴⁶ ἐν μεγέθει γὰρ ἡ·μεγαλοψυχία, ὥσπερ καὶ τὸ κάλλος ἐν μεγάλῳ σώματι, οἱ μικροὶ δ' ἀστεῖοι καὶ σύμμετροι, καλοὶ δ' οὔ. 1123, b 6. The connection of size and beauty is natural to military nations whose mode of fighting gives an advantage to physical strength, and where the king is a

placing himself in circumstances where he will meet men who are better than himself; exertion and competition except for some supreme object are foreign to his nature. In great matters he condescends to receive the homage which is probably less than his due, but only if it is tendered by people of superior worth; he ignores altogether that which is offered in small matters or by commonplace people.⁴⁷

Caring little about anything, he does not court danger except on great occasions, and then he is unsparing of his life, as becomes a man to whom life is a thing of

warrior. To emphasise this, courtly artists took care to represent the king on an enormous scale relatively to his subjects, and especially to his enemies. In Egyptian art the monarch is a giant among dwarfs; in the more advanced Assyrian sculpture he is only head and shoulders taller than his subjects, and Greek sculpture, which reproduces the characteristic feature of the Assyrian, namely low relief, follows it also in avoiding the extreme exaggeration of Egyptian art. The Homeric gods and kings are taller and bigger than other men, but not unnaturally so. Ajax was—

ἔξοχος Ἀργείων κεφαλὴν τε καὶ εὐρέας ὤμους
(Il. 3. 227),

and Nausicaa—

πασάων δ' ὑπὲρ ἣ γε κάρη ἔχει ἠδὲ μέτωπα.
Odys. 6. 107.

Now, when kings do not fight, it is more by dress than size that the court painter distinguishes them.

⁴⁷ καὶ ἐπὶ μὲν ταῖς μεγάλαις καὶ ὑπὸ τῶν σπουδαίων μετρίως ἡσθήσεται, ὡς τῶν οἰκείων τυγχάνων ἢ καὶ ἐλαττόνων.—τῆς δὲ παρὰ τῶν τυχόντων καὶ ἐπὶ μικροῖς πάμπαν ὀλιγωρήσει. 1124, a 5, 10.

little worth. This attitude would be ridiculous unless supported by sterling and exceptional merit, and Aristotle does not hesitate to attribute to him full and complete good conduct; he goes farther and says that such a man ennobles virtue itself by lending to it the charm of his own great nature.⁴⁸ But he has the defects of these merits; he is proud and overbearing with his equals; his just consciousness of his own good qualities causes him to look down on his fellow-creatures in general; ⁴⁹ he will do a favour because that is a mark of superiority, but to receive one would be disagreeable to him, for only inferiors put themselves under an obligation; it is not more blessed to give than to receive, it is more honourable. "Should any one by chance have done him a good turn, he will forget both the benefit and the benefactor; great people do not like to be reminded of their obligations, as Homer well knew when he described the interview between Thetis and Zeus."⁵⁰ He possesses the social virtues in a very moderate degree, being both proud and

⁴⁸ *ἔοικε μὲν οὖν ἡ μεγαλοψυχία οἷον κόσμος τις εἶναι τῶν ἀρετῶν· μείζους γὰρ αὐτὰς ποιεῖ.* 1124, a 1.

⁴⁹ *ὁ μὲν γὰρ μεγαλόψυχος δικαίως καταφρονεῖ [τῶν ἄλλων] (δοξάζει γὰρ ἀληθῶς), οἱ δὲ πολλοὶ τυχόντως.* 1124, b 5.

⁵⁰ *δοκοῦσι δὲ καὶ μνημονεύειν οὗ ἂν ποιήσωσιν εὖ, ὧν δ' ἂν πάθωσιν οὗ—καὶ τὰ μὲν ἡδέως ἀκούειν, τὰ δ' ἀηδῶς· διὸ καὶ τὴν Θέτιν οὐ λέγειν τὰς εὐεργεσίας τῷ Δίῳ, οὐδ' οἱ Λάκωνες πρὸς τοὺς Αθηναίους, ἀλλ' ἃ πεπόνθεσαν ἔν.* 1124, b 12. Aristotle's memory is at fault here; Thetis does speak of the favours she rendered Zeus. She says—

*Ζεῦ πάτερ, εἴ ποτε δὴ σε μετ' ἀθανάτοισιν ὄνησα
ἧ ἔπει ἧ ἔργω, τόδε μοι κρήνην ἐέλωρ.*

Il. i. 503.

reserved, and taking no pains to hide his likes and dislikes—

“An honest mind and plain, he must speak truth
An they will take it, so, if not he's plain.”

He avoids general society, and can only live with intimate friends. He is not given either to praise or blame, and he has the particularly irritating quality of being astonished at nothing. As it is disagreeable to him to be in the wrong, he is careful not to speak off the book, but he sometimes pretends to know less than he does; this makes for effect. One great social merit, albeit a negative one, he possesses; he does not talk about himself, nor indeed about others; “he does not talk about people”—he is not *ἀνθρωπολόγος*.⁵¹ The possession of all the virtues is thus seen to be not inconsistent with a good deal that is socially irritating and disagreeable.

⁵¹ οὐδ' ἀνθρωπολόγος, οὔτε γὰρ περὶ αὐτοῦ ἐρεῖ οὔτε περὶ ἑτέρου. 1125, a 5. Aspasius belongs to the serious school of critics; he says, “If the magnanimous man does not talk about people, what does he talk about? We shall scarcely be wrong in saying that he talks chiefly of theology and the physical sciences; but if he talks about human matters as well, it will be of some virtue or other and the mode of exercising it.” *τίνες οὖν αἱ τοῦ μεγαλοψύχου ὁμιλῖαι καὶ λόγοι, ἐπειδὴ ἀνθρώπων αὐτῷ λόγος οὐκ ἔστιν; ἢ οὐκ ἂν τις ἁμαρτάνοι εἰπὼν περὶ τούτου ὅτι τὸ μὲν ὅλον θεολόγος ἐστὶ καὶ περὶ τούτων καὶ πρὸς τοὺς πολλοὺς καὶ περὶ φύσεως ἐπιστημῶν; εἰ δ' ἄρα καὶ περὶ ἀνθρωπίνων, περὶ ἄλλης τινὸς ἀρετῆς καὶ τῶν κατ' αὐτὴν ἐνεργειῶν.* Aspasius 114. 24. If the virtues are the only subjects of human interest on which the magnanimous man will converse, we need not wonder that he has few friends.

Such is the remarkable and strongly drawn character presented to us by Aristotle under the title of the great-minded man. His mistress is honour—"the greatest of external goods." To win honour is the object of his life—

"By heaven, methinks it were an easy leap
To pluck bright honour from the pale-faced moon
Or dive into the bottom of the deep,
Where fathom line could never touch the ground
And pluck up drowned honour by the locks,
So he that doth redeem her thence might wear,
Without corrival all her dignities."

From this root both his good and bad qualities spring; he is virtuous, for it would be alike dishonourable and inconsistent with his pretensions to be otherwise; he must be brave for, as Aristotle says, "it would never do for him to run away, swinging his arms."⁵²

From the consciousness of his own worth expressed in terms of honour, proceed his unsocial peculiarities, his contempt for his inferiors—that real contempt which is shown by ignoring them—his stand-off manner and disregard of the feelings of others, his morbid desire always to be first, his dislike of being reminded of what he owes to others,—all due to the self-consciousness and false pride of a nature to whom position and the opinion of the world count for so much.

We are sometimes invited to see in this picture an ideal creation and the presentation of a great philosophical truth; even more than this, the representation of a man of the highest speculative power, to whom "the

⁵² οὐδαμῶς τ' ἂν ἁρμόζοι μεγαλοψύχῳ φεύγειν παρασείσαντι.
1123, b 31.

ever-present spectacle of the moral law within," by its sublimity, exalts his mind.⁵³ If such was Aristotle's intention, he has not been successful in conveying it. In this chapter, as in the whole of the book, he is dealing with the virtues of conduct, with that lower and secondary form of excellence which he expressly and repeatedly distinguishes from the ideal life of speculative activity, and accordingly there is no word in the whole description of the great-minded man to suggest that he possesses speculative power in any, much less in the highest degree. Prudence and good sense are indeed given him; they are necessary ingredients in all good conduct, and without them his high opinion of himself would be unjustified and ridiculous, but the highest powers of reason are nowhere attributed to him. That Aristotle has "undertaken to picture the ideal of moral autonomy" is scarcely likely, for it is doubtful whether that expression would have conveyed anything to his mind. If we wish to know what Aristotle meant by a great-minded man it will be safer to refer to his own writings than to Kant. In the Posterior Analytics he discusses what it is to have a great mind; what is the

⁵³ "He is an ideal creation in philosophy, as Philoctetes or Antigone is in tragedy. He is Aristotle's concrete presentation of that *θεωρία* which is essential to human excellence. He 'contemplates' the *κόσμος* or beautiful harmony of his own nature, and allows nothing external to it to dominate his thought or conduct. He thus realises *αὐτάρκεια* or autonomy, and 'possesses all the virtues' in a fuller sense than other virtuous men, who are conscious of the moral law merely through their *φρόνησις* or *practical* insight and self-knowledge. The *μεγαλόψυχος* is a man of the highest *speculative* power." Stewart, Notes to Nicomachæan Ethics, i. 335.

common characteristic of those who are said to possess one. For this purpose, he tells us, "We must look at some of the men whom we know to be great-minded, and see what attribute they possess in so far as they are so. For example, if Alkibiades or Achilles or Ajax have great minds, what characteristic feature have they in common? It is this, that they will not endure to be slighted; it was by reason of this that the first carried on a war, the second became angry, and the third killed himself." ⁵⁴ It is more likely that Aristotle was thinking of great heroic chieftains like Ajax and Achilles, animated by the reputable, if somewhat superficial ideal of honour,⁵⁵ than that he wished to represent a truth in philosophy. What we actually see in his description is the figure of a proud and powerful noble moving among the lesser men around him with a haughty and supercilious indifference, a man for whom the hopes, joys, fears and interests of the world at large are scarcely existent; a Manfred, without his mystery and gloom. For one so constituted the virtues of conduct which are written in a minor key, humility, forbearance, patience under injury, self-sacrifice, are not virtues at all. To be poor and to labour with your hands doing that which is good is, in view of this ideal, not only not meritorious; it is not respectable. The virtuous working man did not enter into Aristotle's moral scheme. "It is not possible,

⁵⁴ εἰ τί ἐστι μεγαλοψυχία ζητοῖμεν, σκεπτέον ἐπὶ τινων μεγαλοψύχων, οὓς ἴσμεν, τί ἔχουσιν ἐν πάντες ἢ τοιοῦτοι. οἶον εἰ Ἀλκιβιάδης μεγαλόψυχος ἦ ὁ Ἀχιλλεὺς καὶ ὁ Αἴας, τί ἐν ἅπαντες; τὸ μὴ ἀνέχεσθαι ὑβριζόμενοι· ὁ μὲν γὰρ ἐπολέμησεν ὁ δ' ἐμήνισεν, ὁ δ' ἀπέκτεινεν ἑαυτόν. *Post Anal.* ii. 13. 97, b 15.

⁵⁵ φαίνεται δ' ἐπιπολαιότερον εἶναι [ἡ τιμή] τοῦ ζητουμένου. 1095, b 23.

he says, for one who lives a mechanical or servile life to practise the virtues of conduct.”⁵⁶

It is not easy to guess why so much pains has been taken with this portrait; ⁵⁷ it is possible that he desired to show by a concrete example that the sentiment of honour enters largely into conduct of the best kind,⁵⁸ and that the man who keeps it consistently before him will be preserved from most of the grosser errors and from all the meannesses of life. Why this truth has been embodied in the shape in which we see it is another and a more puzzling question. We cannot suppose this strange figure to have been drawn from the life, still less to have been proposed as a pattern which the practical statesman should endeavour to follow in educating his citizens. It looks as if Aristotle has worked out the character by deducing the moral consequences which would result from the assumption of a highly gifted person, very conscious of his superiority and not without reason. It is largely a fancy portrait. As a fancy portrait it cannot be considered one of Aristotle's happiest efforts, nor does he usually succeed with the ideal. He had studied in the school of Dionysius and not that of Polygnotus; he could

⁵⁶ οὐκ οἶον τ' ἐπιτηδεύσαι τὰ τῆς ἀρετῆς ζῶντα βίον βάνανσον ἢ θητικόν. *Polit.* 4. 5. 1278, a 21.

⁵⁷ Zell sees no difficulty: “Quod hanc virtutem Aristoteles nostro loco tam copiose et accurate præ multis et aliis describit, haud dubie eo pertinet, quia eadem veterum Atheniensium imprimis proprie habebatur.” To which Michelet adds: “Quin et ipsi Aristoteli propria fuisse videtur.” Michelet, *Commentar. ad Arist. Eth. Nicom.* p. 140.

⁵⁸ οἱ δὲ χαρίεντες καὶ πρακτικοὶ τιμὴν· [ὑπολαμβάνουσι τὰ γὰρ εἶναι] τοῦ γὰρ πολιτικοῦ βίου σχεδὸν τοῦτο τέλος 1905, b 22.

paint men as they were better than as they may be imagined to be.⁵⁹

The deviations from this standard are easily described; some men, from an over-modest distrust of themselves and their powers, are habitually retiring, they take a lower place than that which rightfully belongs to them; "this is a mistake and does them harm, for it not only prevents them from doing many things which it would be good to do, but it deprives them of the chance of getting on in life and consequently diminishes their opportunities of action."⁶⁰ The man with too good an opinion of himself, who takes a too liberal measure of his powers, is criticised and sometimes laughed at. "He affects a loud dress and bearing, talks of himself and his successes in the belief that the world will take him at his own valuation."⁶¹ Still, it is a less fault than the other; for one thing, it is less common, and it is all in the direction of active life."⁶² But neither the over-retiring nor the ostentatious pushing man can be called vicious; their faults harm nobody but themselves; their conduct is morally wrong, but not in a high degree, and in each case there are compensating good qualities.

⁵⁹ Πολύγνωτος μὲν γὰρ κρείττους, Παύσων δὲ χείρους, Διονύσιος δὲ ὁμοίους εἵκαζον. Poet. 2. 1448, a 5.

⁶⁰ ἡ τοιαύτη δὲ δόξα δοκεῖ καὶ χείρους ποιεῖν· ἕκαστοι γὰρ ἐφίενται τῶν κατ' ἀξίαν, ἀφίστανται δὲ καὶ τῶν πράξεων τῶν καλῶν καὶ τῶν ἐπιτηδευμάτων ὥς ἀνάξιοι ὄντες. 1125, a 24.

⁶¹ καὶ ἐσθῆτι κοσμοῦνται καὶ σχήματι καὶ τοῖς τοιούτοις, καὶ βούλονται τὰ εὐτυχήματα καὶ φανερὰ εἶναι αὐτῶν, καὶ λέγουσι περὶ αὐτῶν ὥς διὰ τούτων τιμηθησόμενοι. 1125, a 30.

⁶² 1125, a 32.

CHAPTER 4.—It has already been shown in the case of magnificence and liberality how quantitative differences, differences in size and scale, may give rise to qualitative differences in conduct. Precisely the same thing happens with regard to honour. The man of lofty mind and commanding personality is entitled to conduct himself in society in a way which would be inappropriate and reprehensible in a man of inferior qualities and social position. Conduct with regard to honour must therefore have a code adapted to men of moderate and even small merit, a difference founded on amount, as in the case of money expenditure. Every one has his place in the world which he ought to know and be prepared to maintain. His qualities, whatever they may be, have a certain value, more or less. "We recognise this, sometimes by praising men for allowing no liberties to be taken with them, and sometimes by praising them for not insisting unduly on what they consider to be their rights."⁶³ This shows that there is a right kind of conduct with regard to honour in ordinary life, difficult as it may be to fix it. Obviously we do not always use the expression "fond of honour" in the same sense; when we use it as a term of praise we mean "fonder of it than most people," and when we use it as a term of reproach we mean "fonder of it than he ought to be," and this is true when we speak of a man being fond of anything which, like honour, is itself commendable.⁶⁴ The middle,

⁶³ ἔστι δ' ὅτε τὸν φιλότιμον ἐπαινοῦμεν ὡς ἀνδρώδη καὶ φιλόκαλον, τὸν δ' ἀφιλότιμον ὡς μέτριον καὶ σώφρονα. 1125, b 11.

⁶⁴ δῆλον δ' ὅτι πλεοναχῶς τοῦ φιλοτοιοῦτου λεγομένου οὐκ ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ φέρομεν ἀεὶ τὸ φιλότιμον, ἀλλ' ἐπαινοῦντες μὲν ἐπὶ τὸ μᾶλλον ἢ οἱ πολλοί, ψέγοντες δ' ἐπὶ τὸ μᾶλλον ἢ δεῖ. 1125, b 14. φιλοτοίουτος does not mean "fond of any-

and therefore the right point exists somewhere, although it is not easy to mark it, as is proved by the fact that we blame those who care too much as well as those who care too little for honour. There is no word, Aristotle remarks, which exactly meets the case; the true habit has no name, and for this reason, just as if two men in a theatre were to find a disengaged seat between them each would desire to annex it, so the blamable extremes, finding the middle place unoccupied by a name, each claim a right to it.⁶⁵ All we can say is that when we compare this anonymous virtue with an excessive love of honour it

thing," but "fond of such a thing," here, such a thing as honour. We do not praise a man for being fonder of gambling than the majority of men are. The expression "more than he ought" means "more than the majority do." The "ought" is arrived at in cases where the action is good, by taking the common standard of excellence; anything which rises above that average standard is praiseworthy, anything which falls below it is blamable. We do not praise a man for being no better than the rest of the world.

⁶⁵ ἀνωνύμου δ' οὐσης τῆς μεσότητος, ὡς ἐρήμης ἔοικεν ἀμφισβητεῖν τὰ ἄκρα. 1125, b 17. It is sometimes supposed from the use of the word "empty" here, that Aristotle was thinking of what was called in Attic procedure "an empty action," one in which a plaintiff signs judgment in default of appearance by the other side. If so, the illustration was badly chosen. What is wanted is a simile in which two persons are disputing as to an empty space between them; but if the illustration is taken from the suggested procedure in law there is no dispute; there is only one person who does anything, and he, instead of seeking to occupy a middle place, simply takes the place which his opponent has abandoned.

seems to be deficient, and when compared with backwardness or over-modesty, it appears excessive. But this principle applies to all kinds of good conduct.

The virtue above described would be called in English "proper pride." Some of Aristotle's ancient commentators, thinking it beneath the dignity of virtue that conduct on such a subject as honour should be called virtuous, hesitated to allow it the title. They conceived an object which they called "the beautiful," and they would not allow conduct which did not aspire to this ideal to be called virtuous. To behave well in minor matters was not thought by these critics to deserve the name of good conduct.⁶⁶ Aristotle was wiser than his commentators; he knew how much depends on the humbler virtues both in the formation of character and as helping to make social life tolerable.

CHAPTER 5.—Aristotle in discussing courage indicated the highest form of conduct to which anger or the spirited element in man gives rise. But anger is a feeling which may be aroused in many ways, and its power is by no means exhausted in enabling us to meet danger. In this chapter we have some examples of the way in which it influences conduct when no danger is to be apprehended or perils faced, when, in short, anger becomes temper, and finds vent in private life. In these circumstances the man we praise is the man who keeps his temper (*πραῖος*), and the men we blame

⁶⁶ ἀπορήσειε δ' ἂν τις περὶ αὐτῆς, εἰ ἔστιν ἀρετὴ· εἰ γὰρ πᾶσα ἀρετὴ σκοπὸν τίθεται τὸ καλόν, αὕτη δὲ τὴν τιμὴν, οὐκ ἔστιν ἐνάρητος. Aspasius 117, 29. See p. 259.

are those who are too poor-spirited to have any temper to lose,⁶⁷ and also those who, being unable to check their feelings, are called bad-tempered. He who avoids these extremes and is able to keep his temper is said by Aristotle to be "imperturbable, not led away by passion, but angry only when, and so long as, it is reasonable for him to be so."⁶⁸ He must, however, be capable of anger, otherwise he would be despised, and he must give the rein to the feeling of indignation, when circumstances require it; not to do so would show a want of sensibility and an incapacity for being annoyed which are morally wrong; the man who is never angry will never defend himself or prevent insult, wrong, or injustice to himself and to those whom he is bound to protect. So to act is the mark of a fool.⁶⁹

It appears from this description that there is much in common between the brave man and one who keeps his temper. Both are habitually unmoved,⁷⁰ but both have a fund of anger on which to draw, and both are ready to use it in self-defence or for the sake of others to whom they owe a duty. Spirit or anger is in both cases present as a mainspring of action, but it is held in check in both, and only released when either physical or moral harm are to be apprehended. Courage corresponds to what Butler distinguished as anger, "a passion whose end is to prevent and resist physical force and violence;"

⁶⁷ ἡ δ' ἑλλειψις, εἴτ' ἀοργησία τίς ἐστὶν εἴθ' ὃ τι δῆποτε, ψέγεται. 1126, a 3.

⁶⁸ βούλεται γὰρ ὁ πρᾶος ἀτάραχος εἶναι καὶ μὴ ἄγεσθαι ὑπὸ τοῦ πάθους, ἀλλ' ὥς ἂν ὁ λόγος τάξῃ, οὕτω καὶ ἐπὶ τούτοις καὶ ἐπὶ τοσοῦτον χρόνον χαλεπαίνειν. 1125, b 33.

⁶⁹ οἱ γὰρ μὴ ὀργιζόμενοι ἐφ' οἷς δεῖ ἡλίθιοι δοκοῦσιν εἶναι. 1126, a 4.

⁷⁰ 1117, a 19; 1125, b 34.

the virtue here described nearly corresponds to what he called resentment, "a feeling whose end is the prevention not of natural, but of moral evil."⁷¹ But Aristotle gives a greater latitude to the exercise of anger than Butler, and he does not so precisely define its scope.

The errors to which an excess of anger leads are as various as the occasions which give rise to them. Aristotle notes three typical cases:—

(1) The fault of quick temper (*ὀργιλότης*). Some men get into a towering passion without any real reason,⁷² and on the most trivial provocations; not infrequently they vent their anger on the wrong people; their excitement is quite out of proportion to its real or supposed cause. The storm, however, subsides as quickly as it arose, and the reason of this is that they do not restrain their anger, but allow it free and open play.⁷³

(2) Bitterness of temper. The bitter man (*πικρός*), on the contrary, nurses his anger, nor does he allow it to cool until he has got satisfaction by reprisal.⁷⁴ He silently broods over his grievance and therefore no one can assist in persuading him to be reasonable. He has to get rid of his anger by the slow process of digesting it, as he would a bilious attack. He is a nuisance both to himself and his nearest friends.⁷⁵

⁷¹ Butler, Sermon on Resentment.

⁷² So Herodotus says of Kyaxerês, *ἦν γὰρ ὀργὴν ἀκρός*. i. 73.

⁷³ *οἱ μὲν οὖν ὀργίλοι ταχέως μὲν ὀργίζονται καὶ οἷς οὐ δεῖ καὶ ἐφ' οἷς οὐ δεῖ καὶ μᾶλλον ἢ δεῖ, παύονται δὲ ταχέως· ὁ καὶ βέλτιστον ἔχουσιν. συμβαίνει δ' αὐτοῖς τοῦτο ὅτι οὐ κατέχουσι τὴν ὀργήν.* 1126, a 13.

⁷⁴ *παῦλα δὲ γίνεται ὅταν ἀνταποδιδῶ.* 1126, a 21.

⁷⁵ *εἰς δ' οἱ τοιοῦτοι ἑαυτοῖς ὀχληρότατοι καὶ τοῖς μάλιστα φίλοις.* 1126, a 25.

(3) Harshness of temper.⁷⁶ This is the most distinct opposite to the commendable habit. The man who has it (*χαλεπός*) is worse than any of the others to live with; nothing will satisfy him but redress and revenge, and his ill-temper has no justification; unfortunately it is a very human failing. What has been said on the subject of temper shows how difficult it is to assign precise limits to conduct and to say what amount of deviation on one side or the other is blamable; much depends on the particular circumstances of the case, and the determination of what is right is frequently a matter of taste.⁷⁷ Small errors are therefore pardonable, and all that can certainly be said is, "Avoid extremes, and remember that the greater the extremes, the greater the error."⁷⁸

CHAPTER 6.—In this and the two succeeding chapters Aristotle describes conduct in family life and amongst friends and in private society generally, under three aspects; that of making yourself agreeable, of being truthful, and of contributing to the charm of conversation without being either vulgar or ill-natured. When we remember how much time is spent in society it will be obvious that right conduct in these matters has a good deal to do with making life pleasant, and that wrong conduct goes far to make it unbearable. But there are, and have been from the earliest times, exponents of the Ethics who do not admit that conduct right in the

⁷⁶ 1126, a 26; 30.

⁷⁷ ὁ δὲ πῶς καὶ πῶς παρεκβαίνων ψεκτός, οὐ ῥάδιον τῷ λόγῳ ἀποδοῦναι· ἐν γὰρ τοῖς καθ' ἕκαστα κὰν τῇ αἰσθήσει ἢ κρίσει. 1126, b 2.

⁷⁸ αἱ δ' ὑπερβολαὶ καὶ ἐλλείψεις ψεκταί, καὶ ἐπὶ μικρὸν μὲν γενόμεναι ἡρέμα, ἐπὶ πλεον δὲ μᾶλλον, ἐπὶ πολὺν δὲ σφόδρα. 1126, b 7.

above respects ought to be called virtuous; that word, it is assumed, belongs only to conduct of a serious kind, such as justice, courage, or self-control, and is misapplied to the superficial excellences which may be shown in the social or family circle. Such was not Aristotle's view—he drew no such line of separation; all conduct which is praised is in some degree virtuous, and all that is blamed is in some degree vicious, the moral difference between one kind of conduct and another being measured by the greater or less approbation and disapprobation of society. He gives moreover, a reason for mentioning qualities like social agreeability which clearly shows that he drew no such distinction as his commentators have drawn for him. "Conduct of this kind must be considered," he says, "in order to complete my inductive proof that all virtue is a mean state."⁷⁹

If, then, every kind of social conduct be in some degree or other virtuous or vicious—and unless it were so it could not be brought into the induction—it follows that eccentricities of dress, such as that attributed to the Laconians,⁸⁰ buffoonery and swagger are as really immoral as cowardice or peculation, although not in so high a degree. That conduct moves on an inclined plain is as true as that nature's biological changes are continuous and imperceptible.⁸¹

Aristotle endeavours to arrive at the correct attitude in social life in speech and action by considering how far one is morally justified in making oneself agreeable. It is clear that to proceed on the principle of

⁷⁹ 1127, a 14.

⁸⁰ 1127, b 28.

⁸¹ ἡ φύσις μεταβαίνει συνεχῶς ἀπὸ τῶν ἀψύχων εἰς τὰ ζῷα.
De Part. Animal. iv. 5. 681, a 12.

never saying or doing anything which will give pain or annoyance is as bad as to pay no regard at all to other people's feelings. The right line must be drawn somewhere between extreme complaisancy and habitual surliness. There is no name for this middle state, but it is something like friendship—it is “friendship minus affection.”⁸²

He who possesses the rare social quality of always saying and doing the right thing, does so naturally and without thinking, as he would walk, and not because he cares one way or the other for the people with whom he is thrown. “It makes no difference to him who they are,—friends, strangers, or acquaintances, he has the knack of being pleasant to them all from pure tact, whilst preserving the shades of distinction which relationship or intimacy require.”⁸³ But feeling no more actuates his mode of treating people than it actuates the manner in which he moves or dresses; he does the right thing for his own sake and not for theirs. Although his behaviour is perfectly correct, sacrifices must not be expected of him. He would help a friend in distress so far as tactful sympathy and good advice go, but he would not play the part of a devoted and unselfish friend. To put it in a word, he treats people so far as manner goes, as they ought to be treated, and other things equal, he always prefers to give pleasure rather than pain. His natural good taste prevents him from taking part in social conversation or action which would seriously annoy others; rather than do this,

⁸² ζοικε δὲ μάλιστα φιλία·—διαφέρει δὲ τῆς φιλίας, ὅτι ἄνευ πάθους ἐστὶ καὶ τοῦ στέργειν οἷς ὁμιλεῖ. 1126, b 20–22.

⁸³ ὁμοίως γὰρ πρὸς ἀγνώτας καὶ γνωρίμους καὶ συνήθεις καὶ ἀσυνήθεις αὐτὸ ποιήσει, πλὴν καὶ ἐν ἐκάστοις ὡς ἀρμόζει. 1126, b 25.

he would risk giving offence. Conduct which would bring harm or discredit on the author of it, he will always reprobate. His dislike of giving pain does not go so far as to make him tolerant of what may hurt others or offend good taste.⁸⁴ His manner is different with distinguished and ordinary men, with bare acquaintance and with those whom he knows well, and he adapts it to other distinctions with the constant object of rendering to every one his exact due, in principle endeavouring to make social life pleasant, and to contribute to pleasure of others, without giving unnecessary pain.

CHAPTER 7.—A good chapter on truthfulness. It is shorter than Bacon's essay on the subject and perhaps not so well written, but there is a great deal more in it and it avoids the confusion between falsehood and error which runs through Bacon's essay,—a tract whose celebrity is due more to its literary finish than to the positive value of its contents. Although Aristotle's immediate purpose is only to describe the man who is simple and sincere in social life and does not profess to be other than he is, he goes to the root of all truthfulness when he says, "As a man is, so he lives, speaks, and acts, unless some motive supervene."⁸⁵

In fact every one moves in the line of least resistance, and as it is easier to state what has occurred, as it has occurred, than to invent, every one would tell the truth with the innocent directness of a child if there were not some reason in the way, but inasmuch as there is always some reason, and frequently many, in the way, the absolutely truthful man may be said not to

⁸⁴ 1126, b 33.

⁸⁵ ἕκαστος δ' οἷός ἐστι, τοιαῦτα λέγει καὶ πράττει καὶ οὕτως ἔη, ἐὰν μὴ τινος ἕνεκα πράττη. 1127, a 27.

exist. Nor would he be long tolerated if he did exist; society would suppress a habit which made social life unendurable. No one can afford either always to tell or always to hear pure truth unless he has never done anything to be ashamed of. There are many things which are concealed even from those near to us, and we have Lord Bacon's word for it that this may properly be done. "Set it down," he says, "that a habit of secrecy is both politic and moral. And in this part it is good that a man's face give his tongue leave to speak." To apply the principle of truthfulness with the modifications that mundane life requires, we approve the man "who is truthful in speech and act, who represents his circumstances, merits and demerits as being what they really are, neither more nor less."⁸⁶ Aristotle explains that he is only speaking of truthfulness in cases where its obligation is that which the rules and observances of social life impose, and not in cases where sanctions of a different kind apply, in contracts for instance, or business obligations or judicial oaths.⁸⁷ Although there is no distinction in principle between stating facts in a drawing-room and in a witness-box, society metes out different degrees of disapprobation for departing from fact in the two cases: one is a serious offence and the other may be only an innocent misrepresentation. But the same

⁸⁶ ὁ δὲ μέσος αὐθέκαστος τις ὢν ἀληθευτικός καὶ τῷ βίῳ καὶ τῷ λόγῳ, τὰ ὑπάρχοντα ὁμολογῶν εἶναι περὶ αὐτόν, καὶ οὔτε μεῖζω οὔτε ἐλάττω. 1127, a 23. Mankind have a "sufficient" natural tendency to truthfulness, says Aristotle, οἱ ἄνθρωποι πρὸς τὸ ἀληθὲς πεφύκασιν ἱκανῶς. Rhet. 1. 1355, a 15.

⁸⁷ οὐ γὰρ περὶ τοῦ ἐν ταῖς ὁμολογίαις ἀληθεύοντος λέγομεν, οὐδ' ὅσα εἰς ἀδικίαν ἢ δικαιοσύνην συντείνει (ἄλλης γὰρ ἂν εἴη ταῦτ' ἀρετῆς) ἀλλ' ἐν οἷς μηδενὸς τοιούτου διαφέροντος. 1127, a 33.

habit regulates conduct in all cases—love of truth. “The man who has this habit will speak truth when it does not matter, and when it does.”⁸⁸ The intellectual habit of accuracy has a good deal to do with the moral quality of truth. Vagueness or exaggeration in language make deceit easy and often lead to it. A man who is not telling the truth invariably protects himself by the use of loose general terms: “*dolus latet in generalibus.*” But if accuracy were insisted upon we should have no poetry—“Poets,” as the proverb reminds us, “tell many lies.”—κατὰ τὴν παροιμίαν πολλὰ ψεύδονται ἄοιδοί. (Met. 1. 2. 983, a 3.)

Such is the character of the man who conceals nothing and neither exaggerates nor diminishes anything, who in Homer’s phrase does not “hide one thing in his mind and say another,”⁸⁹ who holds himself out to the world as being what he is, with a leaning, however, on the score of good taste, to self-depreciation.⁹⁰ On one side of him stands man, who talks large and habitually magnifies himself and what belongs to him. When this is done without any motive but self-glorification, although it is reprehensible as being a departure from accuracy, “there is not much harm in it; it is empty vanity rather than vice.”⁹¹ “Nor ought a man to be severely blamed who boasts only for the sake of honour or reputation, as

⁸⁸ ἐν λόγῳ καὶ ἐν βίῳ ἀληθεύει τῷ τὴν ἕξιν τοιοῦτος εἶναι. 1127, b 2.

⁸⁹ ἐχθρὸς γάρ μοι κείνος ὅμως Αἴδαο πύλῃσιν
ὥς χ’ ἕτερον μὲν κεύθῃ ἐνὶ φρεσίν, ἄλλο δὲ εἴπῃ.

Il. 9. 312.

⁹⁰ ἐπὶ τὸ ἕλαττον δὲ μᾶλλον τοῦ ἀληθοῦς ἀποκλίνει
ἐμμελέστερον γὰρ φαίνεται διὰ τὸ ἐπαχθεῖς τὰς ὑπερβολὰς
εἶναι. 1127, b 7.

⁹¹ μάταιος φαίνεται μᾶλλον ἢ κακός. 1127, b 11.

these are not disreputable objects, but it is bad form to do so for money or money's worth." ⁹² There is the same distinction in swaggering as in lying; some people lie for the pleasure of it, and others for gain or honour. ⁹³ "As a rule, those who pretend to know more than they really do for the sake of gain select subjects in which knowledge is of advantage to others and in which their ignorance cannot well be detected—such subjects as medicine or divination, into which a good deal of guesswork enters." ⁹⁴

The extreme in the other direction is self-depreciation, making yourself out to be worse than you really are, especially in matters of common belief. This is what Sokrates used to do, ⁹⁵ and it is in better taste than the other fault; the motive is not gain or any sort of advantage, but dislike of sententiousness. ⁹⁶ When, however, self-depreciation is on unimportant and obvious subjects, such as the Laconian affectation in dress, it is a form of pretentiousness. "But a moderate use of irony, not too obvious or glaring, sits gracefully on a man." ⁹⁷

Irony, in the sense in which it is now commonly taken, as meaning an affectation of ignorance, is here attributed to Sokrates. The expression occurs in Plato, where

⁹² εἰ δ' ἕνεκά τινος, ὁ μὲν δόξης ἢ τιμῆς οὐ λίαν ψεκτός, ὁ δὲ ἀργυρίου, ἢ ὅσα εἰς ἀργύριον, ἀσχημονέστερος. 1127, b 11.

⁹³ 1127 b 15.

⁹⁴ οἱ δὲ κέρδους, ὧν καὶ ἀπόλαυσις ἐστὶ τοῖς πέλας καὶ διαλαθεῖν ἐστὶ μὴ ὄντα, οἷον μάντιν σοφὸν ἱατρόν. 1127, b 19.

⁹⁵ 1127, b 25.

⁹⁶ φεύγοντες τὸ ὀγκηρόν. 1127, b 24.

⁹⁷ οἱ δὲ μετρίως χρώμενοι τῇ εἰρωνείᾳ, καὶ περὶ τὰ μὴ λίαν ἐμποδῶν καὶ φανερὰ εἰρωνευόμενοι χαρίεντες φαίνονται. 1127, b 29.

Thrasymachus speaks of "Sokrates' usual irony."⁹⁸ The authority of Aristotle has had a good deal to do with fixing the present meaning of the word. It was not used by Plato, except in the one passage above quoted; the thing is common enough, but in its extreme form of pretending not to know what everybody else knows, it is now chiefly used by judges on the bench, and when well managed is both effective, and as Aristotle says, graceful. It is not a serious moral fault.

CHAPTER 8.—"Since life requires relaxation, and since social conversation of a light and agreeable kind is one form of relaxation, there must be a way of taking part in such conversation without jarring on the feelings of others;⁹⁹ a knack of saying what ought to be said rightly and also of listening, although there is a difference between the two. As there is a right way, there will also be wrong ways in the form of excess and defect. Those who are always trying to raise a laugh are buffoons;¹⁰⁰ they care more about setting on their hearers to laugh too, than about the propriety of what they say or about avoiding to give pain to the objects of their mirth. Those on the other hand who are incapable of saying anything amusing themselves and who are displeased with others who make the effort, are morose and boorish. Those who have the gift of ready and appropriate wit are called versatile, meaning that they adapt themselves easily to the occasion; this is in reality a movement of the mind, and you may judge character by

⁹⁸ αὕτη ἐκείνη ἡ εἰρωνυῖα Σωκράτους εἰρωνεία. Plato, Rep. 337 A.

⁹⁹ ὁμιλία τις ἐμμελής. 1127, b 34.

¹⁰⁰ οἱ μὲν οὖν τῇ γελοίῳ ὑπερβάλλοντες βωμολόχοι δοκοῦσιν εἶναι καὶ φορτικοί. 1128, a 4.

its movements just as well as you do the body.¹⁰¹ But inasmuch as the things which cause laughter lie on the surface and the majority of people enjoy childishness and ill-natured jokes more than they ought, even buffoons are called versatile, being taken for men of refined wit; ¹⁰² it is, however, unnecessary to point out how widely they differ from the versatile man in the true sense. The man who would avoid the extremes must have tact; the tactful man says and listens to the things which are fit for the ears of a good man and a gentleman, for there is the opportunity, even in the lightest conversation, for such things to be said and listened to, and the amusing talk of an educated man differs from that of a vulgar ignorant person. We see this difference in the old and moern comedies; in the old comedy, coarseness of expression made the spectators laugh, but in the new comedy it is innuendo; ¹⁰³ there is much difference between the two in the point of good taste.

“Ought raillery of the right kind to be defined as saying what is not unbecoming a gentleman, or as not hurting the feelings of a listener, or as giving pleasure to the hearers? or are points of this kind indefinable? The rule, whatever it may be, extends to listening, for what

¹⁰¹ οἱ δ' ἐμμελῶς παίζοντες εὐτράπελοι προσαγορεύονται, οἷον εὐτροποι· τοῦ γὰρ ἥθους αἱ τοιαῦται δοκοῦσι κινήσεις εἶναι, ὥσπερ δὲ τὰ σώματα ἐκ τῶν κινήσεων κρίνεται, οὕτω καὶ τὰ ἥθη. 1128, a 9.

¹⁰² ἐπιπολάζοντος δὲ τοῦ γελοίου, καὶ τῶν πλείστων χαιρόντων τῇ παιδιᾷ καὶ τῷ σκώπτειν μᾶλλον ἢ δεῖ, καὶ οἱ βωμολόχοι εὐτράπελοι προσαγορεύονται ὡς χαρίεντες. 1128, a 12.

¹⁰³ ἴδοι δ' ἂν τις καὶ ἐκ τῶν κωμῳδιῶν τῶν παλαιῶν καὶ τῶν καινῶν· τοῖς μὲν γὰρ ἦν γελοῖον ἢ αἰσχρολογία, τοῖς δὲ μᾶλλον ἡ ὑπόνοια. 1128, a 22.

a man will bear to hear he does not forbear to imitate.¹⁰⁴ It follows that he must put some restriction on what he says, for a gibe is a kind of abuse and the law forbids certain kinds of abuse, and it would be well if it forbade certain kinds of gibes also. The witty man who is a gentleman will act on the principle described, being, so to speak, a law to himself, whether he be called a man of tact, or simply versatile. But the buffoon cannot resist a joke, sparing neither himself nor others for the sake of a laugh, and saying what a man of refined wit would never say, and sometimes what he would not like to hear. The boor is useless in society; he contributes nothing to it, and his gaucherie is an annoyance to every one."

"The mean in social life, then, takes the three forms which have been mentioned. They are all concerned with talk and demeanour in society of a special kind. The subject of the first is truthfulness, that of the second is pleasure in our moments of relaxation, and of the third, pleasure in our intercourse in other circumstances of life."

Aristotle's remarks about the old comedy show little appreciation of the great writers of that school and period. He seems to have been disgusted with the coarseness of their jokes and language and indignant at their licence of personal invective. But one wonders that he saw nothing worth noticing in Aristophanes except this side of him; no appreciation of his wit, humour and great poetic gifts. Humour, however, is

¹⁰⁴ ἃ γὰρ ὑπομένει ἀκούων ταῦτα καὶ ποιεῖν δοκεῖ. 1128, a 28. ποιεῖν has probably here the sense of "to compose" as a poet does; "to speak in the way in which we hear others speak."

not Aristotle's strong point, and he may possibly have resented Aristophanes' caricature of philosophy in the *Clouds*. From whatever cause, he scarcely mentions him either in the *Poetics* or elsewhere. His attitude to the early Greek comedy is as one-sided and unjust as that of Horace to the early Latin comedy :

“At vestri proavi Plautinos et numeros et
laudavere sales; nimium patienter utrumque
ne dicam stulte mirati, si modo ego et vos
scimus inurbanum lepidio seponere dictum.”

Aristotle does not mention that greatest of all social pests—the bore. Perhaps they were not so common in Athens as elsewhere; perhaps the opposing habits did not seem obvious; but that boredom is an immorality to be reprobated and, were it possible, suppressed, is not doubtful.

CHAPTER 9.—“Shame can scarcely be called a virtue; it is a passion rather than a habit. Anyhow, it is defined as the fear of being badly thought of, and its effect is somewhat like that produced by fear in circumstances of danger,¹⁰⁵ for people who are ashamed blush, and people who are in fear of death turn yellow-green. Both these results are due to the body, hence they are feelings rather than habits. The feeling does not suit every age, but it is proper to youth. Young people ought to be susceptible of shame, because, living as they do under the influence of their feelings, they would often be led into error but that shame restrains them; but no one

¹⁰⁵ ἀποτελείται τῇ περὶ τὰ δεινὰ φόβῳ παραπλήσιον.
ἐρυθραίνονται γὰρ οἱ αἰσχυρόμενοι, οἱ δὲ τὸν θάνατον φοβούμενοι ὠχρίῳσιν. 1128, b 12.

would commend an elderly man for blushing, for he ought not to do anything to be ashamed of, nor is shame an attribute of the good, seeing that the bad have it. To be so constituted as to be ashamed if you do wrong and for this reason to imagine yourself to be good, is absurd, for you only feel shame when you have acted voluntarily, and no good man ever voluntarily does what he ought not to do. Shame may therefore be called 'hypothetically good; if a man does wrong he will be ashamed'; this is a contingency which does not arise in good conduct.¹⁰⁶ Nor does it follow that if shamelessness is a vice and if we blame one for not being ashamed when he does wrong, that it is a virtue to be ashamed when you do wrong. For the same reason self-mastery is not a virtue, but a mixture of virtue and vice."

Although conduct of every kind, however important or however trivial, is theoretically the subject of one and the same science, yet much of what we do is to all appearance so indifferent in its results to ourselves and to others as not to be worth considering in laying down rules for practical guidance in life. It is probable that nothing said or done is wholly without some influence on character, but for the practical purposes of ethics it would be endless to take everything into account, and that science therefore confines itself to conduct important enough to excite attention in the shape of praise or blame.

The varieties of conduct which have been examined in the sixth and succeeding chapters of this book bring us near to the boundary which separates actions important

¹⁰⁶ εἴη δ' ἂν ἡ αἰδῶς ἐξ ὑποθέσεως ἐπιεικής· εἰ γὰρ πράξει, αἰσχύνουτ' ἂν· οὐκ ἔστι δὲ τοῦτο περὶ τὰς ἀρετάς. 1129, b 29.

enough to be ethically cognisable from those which are not. It will have been noticed how frequently Aristotle seems to hesitate whether he shall condemn or approve. "It is frequently not easy," he remarks, "to say on grounds of reason whether an act is blamable or not, it is a matter to be determined by individual taste";¹⁰⁷ and when he descends to particular cases he often feels obliged to say that "such and such an act is not very wrong," which probably means that there are two opinions as to whether it is wrong at all. The fourth book is interesting for another reason; it shows how much there is in common between Greek life in the fourth century and our own, how permanent are the motives which actuate conduct in general, and how similar on the whole that conduct is. With some not very numerous exceptions, what Aristotle has written on the subject of liberality, proper pride and demeanour in society might have been written, it may almost be said, has been written, by Addison and Thackeray.

¹⁰⁷ ὁ δὲ πόσον καὶ πῶς παρεκβαίνων ψεκτός, οὐ ῥᾶδιον τῷ λόγῳ ἀποδοῦναι· ἐν γὰρ τοῖς καθ' ἕκαστα κὰν τῇ αἰσθήσει ἢ κρίσει. 1126, b 2.

CHAPTER VI

Book V.

SPECIAL KINDS OF CONDUCT (continued)

JUSTICE

Πότερον ἔστι τι ἔν, ἢ οὐκ ἔστιν, οὗ ἀναγκαῖον πάντας τοὺς πολίτας μετέχειν, εἴπερ μέλλει πόλις εἶναι; Plato, Protag.. 324 E.

Ce que la politique conseille, la justice l'autorise.

Talleyrand..

JUSTICE receives a more elaborate treatment than any other virtue of conduct, nor are the reasons far to seek. Of the four great virtues—Courage, Self-restraint, Wisdom, and Justice, it is the only one which is distinctly altruistic;¹ hence it is the political virtue *par excellence*, the virtue comprising man's duty to his neighbour as a member of the state, as distinguished on the one hand from his duty to himself, and on the other from his obligation to be agreeable in private life.² As such it is the key to many constitutional problems, and differences of opinion with regard to it frequently arise, causing political unrest and not seldom revolution. Unfortunately, too, it offers a conspicuous example of the errors which arise when a word is used in many senses, and especially when (as in this case) the senses are so various that it is sometimes hard to trace their relationship. Frequently the word expresses nothing but personal preference or private opinion; "Give me justice: I want nothing but what is fair and right;"—that is a phrase commonly used by contending parties: it simply means, "I want a decision in my favour." Rhetoricians of all kinds—advocates, public speakers, and even serious politicians appeal in

¹ ἐν τῷ πρὸς ἕτερον ἔχει τὴν δύναμιν. 1130, b 1.

² ἐν ταῖς ὁμιλίαις καὶ τῷ συζῆν καὶ λόγων καὶ πραγμάτων κοινωνεῖν. 1126, b 11.

every mood and tense to justice in support of the views they happen to be advocating; justice here means "My policy," "the principles of my party," "the interest of my client"—every one is anxious to do business under such an attractive trade mark. Aristotle, with his analytical mind and fondness for precise verbal definitions, had here a wide field for the exercise of his powers in endeavouring to bring this chaos into some order and to fix the meaning of "just" and "unjust" in the cases to which they can be legitimately applied. He had, moreover, to bring justice within the doctrine of the mean. Obviously you cannot say that justice is a mean between the defect of having too much of the quality of justice and the defect of having too little, as you can say that courage is a mean between having too much and too little of the quality which constitutes courage. The extremes between which justice lies (if it can be said to occupy such a position at all) are not two opposite states, but one and the same state, namely injustice, or the habit of getting too much of that which is good and too little of that which is bad. Some care and ingenuity were required before this awkward corner could be safely turned, and it will be seen hereafter in what way Aristotle dealt with the difficulty.

But there was another and special reason why justice should have been comprehensively handled and its meanings fixed, if possible, once for all. It had formed the avowed subject of Plato's greatest, and with one exception, his longest dialogue. "To search for justice" is expressly said to have been the object for which the interlocutors in the Republic came together and which determined the whole scope of the inquiry.³

³ οὗ δὲ ἕνεκα πάντα ζητοῦμεν—δικαιοσύνη. Plato, Rep. 430 D. πρῶτον μὲν χρὴ τόδε ἀναμνησθῆναι, ὅτι ἡμᾶς,

According to the view put forward in the Dialogue, justice, regarded as a quality of the individual man, is a condition in which his reason, passions, and desires are in harmony, each performing its separate function without encroaching on the functions of any of the others; whilst regarded in its political aspect, as a necessary condition of the well-being of the state, it is to be found under constitutional arrangements which secure the harmonious co-operation of the governing, military, and mercantile classes. According to the theory of the Republic, therefore, justice is not a habit inducing a man to act in a certain way towards others, but a psychological condition in which certain functions of his mind or soul, assumed to be separate, or at least capable of acting separately, are so adjusted that each performs its own distinct duties in correspondence with the duties of the others. Such a conception of justice gives no assistance in practice: it does not in the least help the legislator, judge or juryman, concerned as they all are with what goes on outside them, to know the "conduct within" which Plato declares to be justice in the only true sense of the word.⁴ The Republic therefore, notwithstanding its extraordinary merits as a composition, might as well never have been written so far as practical teaching on the subject professedly discussed in it is concerned. But it occupied a place in the field of

Ζητοῦντες δικαιοσύνην οἷόν ἐστι καὶ ἀδικίαν δεῦρο ἤκομεν.
Ibid. 472 B.

⁴ τὸ δὲ γε ἀληθές, τοιοῦτον μὲν τι ἦν, ὥς ἔοικεν, ἡ δικαιοσύνη, ἀλλ' οὐ περὶ τῶν ἑξω πράξιν τῶν αὐτοῦ, ἀλλὰ περὶ τῶν ἐντος ὥς ἀληθῶς, περὶ ἑαυτὸν καὶ τὰ ἑαυτοῦ, μὴ ἐάσαντα τὰλλότρια πράττειν ἕκαστον ἐν αὐτῷ μηδὲ πολυπραγμόνειν πρὸς ἀλλήλα τὰ ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ γένη. Plato, Rep. 443 C D.

discussion and added one more to the numerous dicta on the subject. It is remarkable, therefore, that Aristotle, after having announced his intention of following his usual method,⁵ should not have discussed this celebrated opinion, and indeed should only have discerned it in the last chapter of the book.⁶ Notwithstanding this reticence, it is hard to suppose that the memorable conversation in the house of Kephalus was not present to his mind and that he did not intend to displace the Platonic theory by his own. That he should have made no direct allusion to it is matter for remark, but nothing more. Of Aristotle in relation to Plato it is more than commonly true that the names we forget are those which we remember only too well.⁷

⁵ ἡ δὲ σκέψις ἡμῖν ἔστω κατὰ τὴν αὐτὴν μέθοδον τοῖς προειρεμένοις. 1129, a 5.

⁶ κατὰ μεταφορὰν δὲ καὶ ὁμοιότητα ἔστιν οὐκ αὐτῷ πρὸς αὐτὸν δίκαιον ἀλλὰ τῶν αὐτοῦ τίσιν, κτέ. 1138, b 5. The whole of Chapter 11 deals with the subject.

⁷ "On n'oublie que les noms dont on se souvient trop." Mme. de Stael.

TEXT

CHAPTER 1.—Aristotle begins, as has already been said, by announcing his intention of treating the subject of justice according to his usual plan—that is, by first considering current opinions about it. But, although justice is a word of very various meaning, and one on which many half-truths and some no-truths had been said by poets, public speakers and teachers, he does not state and review opinions in the manner we are led to expect,—not in the way, for instance, in which he catalogues opinions about happiness, pleasure, or friendship before discussing those subjects. He begins by observing “that everybody understands by justice, the habit which causes men to do and wish just acts.”⁸

This popular definition leaves open the essential question what acts are just, a point on which neither theorists nor ordinary people were agreed,⁹ but the question so often debated in Plato, and which both the

⁸ ὁρῶμεν δὴ πάντας τὴν τοιαύτην ἔξιν βουλομένους λέγειν δικαιοσύνην, ἀφ’ ἧς πρακτικοὶ τῶν δικαίων εἰσὶ καὶ ἀφ’ ἧς δικαιοπραγοῦσι καὶ βούλονται τὰ δίκαια. 1129, a 6.

⁹ Justice is variously described by the speakers in the Republic as “telling the truth and restoring what you have taken” (ἀληθῆ τε λέγειν καὶ ἂν λάβῃ τίς αποδιδόναι. Rep. 331 D); “doing good to your friends and harm to your enemies” (τὸ τοὺς φίλους εὖ ποιεῖν καὶ τοὺς ἐχθροὺς

historic and the Platonic Sokrates answered in the affirmative, is also raised: "Is justice a matter of scientific knowledge, or not?" Aristotle therefore opens the subject by pointing out the distinction between habits on one hand and knowledge and capacity on the other. "Knowledge and capacity may be exercised in any, and even in contrary directions, but we are determined by habit only in one."¹⁰ This distinction, suggested partly by his having just described justice as a habit and partly by the statement that wishing to do just acts is a part of the definition, was necessary to be kept in view in consequence of the confusion arising from the Sokratic contention that virtue is knowledge. In the *Hippias Minor* (which seems to be here referred to) Sokrates maintains that justice must necessarily be either a capacity or a science, or both, and he concludes that the man who willingly acts unjustly cannot be otherwise than a good man.¹¹ A paradox of this kind is of course not to be taken seriously, but the want of a clear view of the difference between conduct and artistic or professional skill has been at all times responsible for a good deal of loose thinking and sentimental writing, and Aristotle did well to remind his hearers of it at the outset. He adds another warning. "Both justice and injustice are words used in many senses,

κακῶς. Rep. 332 D); "minding your own business and not being meddlesome" (τὸ τὰ αὐτοῦ πράττειν καὶ μὴ πολυπραγμονεῖν. Rep. 433 A); "benefit to others, loss to yourself" (ἀλλότριον ἀγαθόν, οἰκεία ζημία. Rep. 392 B).

¹⁰ δύναμις μὲν γὰρ καὶ ἐπιστήμη δοκεῖ τῶν ἐναντίων ἢ αὐτὴ εἶναι, ἕξις δὲ ἢ ἐναντία τῶν ἐναντίων οὐ. 1129, a 13.

¹¹ ὁ ἄρα ἐκὼν ἀμαρτάνων καὶ αἰσχροῦ καὶ ἄδικα ποιῶν, ὧς Ἰππία, εἴπερ τίς ἐστιν οὗτος, οὐκ ἂν ἄλλος εἴη ἢ ὁ ἀγαθός. Hip. Min. 376 B.

but inasmuch as their respective meanings lie near to one another the confusion arising from the use of the same word is liable to escape notice and is not obvious, as in the cases in which the difference is considerable.¹² It is not like those cases of equivocation where there is a visible difference in the things described by the common name,¹³ as in the case of the key bone of the neck and the key of a door, or the foot of a mountain and the foot of a chair, which are so far apart that no mistake can possibly arise."¹⁴

If now we examine what is really meant by "just acts" we find the various senses are reducible to two—conformity to law, and equality in dealings with others. Consider what conformity to law implies. The scope of law in an Hellenic State was almost coextensive with conduct in general; the object of the law being "the common weal," whether the community might happen to be a democracy, an aristocracy, an oligarchy or any other form of government.¹⁵

¹² *ἔοικε δὲ πλεοναχῶς λέγεσθαι ἡ δικαιοσύνη καὶ ἡ ἀδικία, ἀλλὰ διὰ τὸ σύνεγγυς εἶναι τὴν ὁμωνυμίαν αὐτῶν λανθάνει καὶ οὐκ ὥσπερ ἐπὶ τῶν πόρρω δήλη μᾶλλον.* 1129, a 26. In the *Physics* (vii. 4. 249, a 23) Aristotle points out that univocal words (homonyms) sometimes so nearly resemble the thing whose name they bear as scarcely to be real homonyms but synonyms. *εἰσι δὲ τῶν ὁμωνυμιῶν αἱ μὲν πολὺν ἀπέχουσαι, αἱ δὲ ἔχουσαι τινα ὁμοιότητα, αἱ δ' ἐγγὺς ἢ γένει ἢ ἀναλογίᾳ, διὸ οὐ δοκοῦσιν ὁμωνυμίαι εἶναι οὔσαι.* That is the case here.

¹³ *διαφορὰ πολλὴ ἡ κατὰ τὴν ἰδέαν.* 1129, a 29.

¹⁴ *οὐκ ὥσπερ ἐπὶ τῶν πόρρω δήλη μᾶλλον.* 1129, a 28.

¹⁵ *οἱ δὲ νόμοι ἀγορεύουσι περὶ πάντων, στοχαζόμενοι ἢ τοῦ κοινῇ συμφέροντος πᾶσιν, ἢ τοῖς κυρίοις, ἢ κατ' ἄλλον τινα τρόπον τοιοῦτον.* 1129, b 14.

The science regulating this common weal is the science of Politics, which, as we were told in the very first chapter of the Ethics, prescribes what we ought to do and what forbear from doing,¹⁶ so that if happiness depends, as it does, on conduct, "things just" in this wide sense of conformity to law will be all the things which produce happiness, assuming always laws to be well and intelligently framed.

Justice, therefore, in this sense is coextensive with Ethics, in other words with the whole of that large department of human conduct which is praised and blamed. "Laws, with few exceptions, are the expression of good conduct in its widest sense, for the law directs us to live in obedience to the dictates of the moral virtues and forbids the corresponding misconduct."¹⁷ Justice is therefore complete virtue, since its possessor will not only do his duty to himself by being temperate, brave and so on, which many people can do, but will also do his duty in these and all other respects to his neighbour, which is infinitely harder,¹⁸ for as Bias well said, 'authority will show the man.'¹⁹ The view that Justice is 'the good of others' confirms this altruistic view of the virtue, for the just man does

¹⁶ νομοθετοῦσης τί δεῖ πράττειν καὶ τίνων ἀπέχεσθαι. 1094, b 5.

¹⁷ σχεδὸν γὰρ τὰ πολλὰ τῶν νομίμων τὰ ἀπὸ τῆς ὅλης ἀρετῆς προσταττόμενά ἐστιν· καθ' ἑκάστην γὰρ ἀρετὴν προστατᾷ ζῆν καὶ καθ' ἑκάστην μοχθηρίαν κωλύει ὁ νόμος. 1130, b 22.

¹⁸ τελεία δ' ἐστίν, ὅτι ὁ ἔχων αὐτὴν καὶ πρὸς ἕτερον δύναται τῇ ἀρετῇ χρῆσθαι, ἀλλ' οὐ μόνον καθ' αὐτόν· πολλοὶ γὰρ ἐν μὲν τοῖς οἰκείοις τῇ ἀρετῇ δύνανται χρῆσθαι, ἐν δὲ τοῖς πρὸς ἕτερον ἀδυνάτουσιν. 1129, b 31.

¹⁹ 1130, a 1.

what benefits others irrespective of their station, whether they be rulers or fellow-citizens." ²⁰

CHAPTER 2.—“We now come to justice and injustice in the special and proper sense of the words, as signifying, not good or bad conduct in general, but that variety of conduct which implies fairness or unfairness in dealing with others. By a fair man we mean one who does not attempt either to secure for himself or to give to others more than a proper share of goods or other benefits, or (which comes to the same thing) less than a proper share of evils or disadvantages. That this is a special form of conduct is obvious: it is not involved in our notions of courage or self-restraint or magnanimity or generosity, but that it is a virtue of conduct is proved by the fact that we blame any departure from it.” ²¹

“Justice, when used in the wide general sense of conformity to law, has much in common with justice in its special and limited sense; they are both referable to the same kind of conduct, namely conduct to others; they are synonymous inasmuch as both fall under the same genus, but one implies dealing with others in a spirit of fairness or equality, and the other implies dealing with others in a manner of which society approves, with or without the implication of fairness or of equality.” ²²

²⁰ ἄλλω γὰρ τὰ συμφέροντα πράττει, ἢ ἄρχοντι ἢ κοινωνῶ. 1130, a 4.

²¹ ὅταν δὲ πλεονεκτῇ, πολλάκις κατ' οὐδεμίαν τῶν τοιούτων (μοχθηρίων) ἀλλὰ μὴν οὐδὲ κατὰ πάσας, κατὰ πονηρίαν δέ γε τινά (ψέγομεν γάρ). 1130, a 19.

²² ἄμφω γὰρ ἐν τῷ πρὸς ἕτερον ἔχουσι τὴν δύναμιν, ἀλλ' ἢ μὲν περὶ τιμὴν ἢ χρήματα ἢ σωτηρίαν—καὶ δι' ἡδονὴν τὴν ἀπὸ

Of justice used in the special sense there are two kinds :—

1. Distributive justice (*διανεμητικὸν, νεμητικὸν δίκαιον*), the habit of dealing fairly in the division of honours, wealth, or whatever else may be shared by those who are partners in the State.²³

2. Regulative justice (*διορθωτικὸν δίκαιον*), a habit of dealing fairly in questions arising out of the various transactions between man and man, whether partners in the State or not.²⁴

As to (1); the assumption made by Aristotle is that there is a common fund for partition,²⁵ and that those entitled to share it are the persons described as “partners in the State,” in other words citizens.

The Greek, or at least the Athenian conception of a citizen, was that of a shareholder; he was looked on as a partner, not as a contributory. He had to pay taxes no doubt, but so had others who were not citizens; it was not considered a self-evident proposition that the payment of taxes involved civil rights, representation and taxation did not go together. The fund in which as a partner the citizen was entitled to share was not only money or the material property of the State, but included any advantages which a citizen might

τοῦ κέρδους, ἥ δὲ περὶ ἅπαντα περὶ ὅσα ὁ σπουδαῖος. 1130, b 1.

²³ τὸ ἐν ταῖς διανομαῖς τιμῆς ἢ χρημάτων ἢ τῶν ἄλλων ὅσα μεριστὰ τοῖς κοινωνοῦσι τῆς πολιτείας. 1130, b 31.

²⁴ ὃ γίνεται ἐν τοῖς συναλλάγμασι καὶ τοῖς ἐκουσίοις καὶ τοῖς ἀκωσίοις. 1131, b 25.

²⁵ τὸ μὲν γὰρ διανεμητικὸν δίκαιον τῶν κοινῶν ἀεί. 1131, b 27.

be entitled to; ²⁶ such as honours, rights, privileges as well as other benefits. If we look to Aristotle's definition alone it would seem that distributive justice was limited to the case of citizens. But if we examine the cases he gives in illustration of this form of justice, it is obvious that he means more than this. He says that the State holds together by the observance of the rule of reciprocal proportion, ²⁷ which is the rule applicable to distributive justice, and the cases of reciprocal proportion given are those between builders, shoemakers, doctors and others who wish to exchange the products of their skill and labour, the majority of whom would certainly not be citizens, but resident aliens or strangers. The common fund, therefore, which is always the subject matter of distributive justice must be extended to mean the aggregate fund available for the purchase of commodities from whatever sources derived, as well as State property strictly so-called and other advantages.

(2) Regulative justice, applied for the purpose of adjusting any inequality which may arise in business or other transactions between man and man independently of their status, is said to have two divisions according as the transactions are voluntary or involuntary. Aristotle gives as examples of the former, sale and purchase, loan of money at interest, pledge, lending without interest, deposit of goods kept for the use of depositor, letting goods for hire; and as examples of the latter, theft, adultery, poisoning, procuring, enticement of slaves,

²⁶ ὅσα μεριστὰ τοῖς κοινωνοῦσι τῆς πολιτείας. 1130, b 32.

²⁷ τῷ ἀντιποιεῖν γὰρ ἀνάλογον συμμένει ἡ πόλις. 1132, - b 33.

murder by secret means, false witness (all secret acts), and assault, forcible detention, murder, rape, maiming, criminal libel and slander, all open acts.²⁸

The former class, or voluntary transactions, are all cases of contract; the latter, or involuntary transactions, are all cases of wrongs. The examples given by Aristotle are illustrations merely, and not a complete enumeration of the cases in which transactions would require to be adjusted by law.

Rights of property arising otherwise than by contract are not mentioned or alluded to, nor does the enumeration include any wrongs arising from negligence. Yet the ownership of land, houses, and mining leases must have conferred other rights which would require to be enforced, and damages must have been recoverable in many cases, at all events, where negligence caused loss. The justice which regulates business affairs must have had in practice a wider scope than is indicated by Aristotle's examples.

One more remark on the two main divisions of justice has to be made. In the case of distributive justice the parties amongst whom the partition has to be made may be, in the eye of the law, either equal or unequal, but when an appeal is made to regulative justice the law assumes everybody to be equal, whether they are so or not.

The function of distributive justice, therefore, is to lay down the principles upon which persons either of equal or unequal merit ought to share in a common fund; the function of regulative justice is to fix the

²⁸ 1131, a 1. Aristotle does not mention the criminal offences of treason (*προδοσία*), perjury (*ψευδομαρτυρία*), usurpation of civic rights—a most serious offence punished by slavery—or sacrilege (*ἀσεβεία*), one scarcely less so.

penalty properly payable in the shape of damages or punishment for the infraction of rights or the commission of wrongs, everybody concerned being supposed equal. How is this to be done? To answer this is to answer the question asked at the beginning of the book, "What kind of a mean is justice, and what are the extremes between which it lies?"²⁹

First as to the rule in distributive justice. Take the case where the common fund is state property or the honours which the state has to bestow, and the question is how two citizens ought to share them. We have four things to consider; two persons and two shares. Now "every one agrees that the distribution should be according to merit of some kind."³⁰ What is merit is a question which, in the case supposed, will be differently answered under different forms of constitution.³¹ In a pure democracy it is thought that to be free is a merit, and all being equally free, every one would be entitled to share equally in property and honour.

That is the democratic idea—everybody to share equally because everybody is equally free. One man to count for one, and nobody to count for more than one. "In an oligarchy, wealth, in other cases noble birth or virtue, are considered meritorious." But whatever the test applied, the just rule is in all cases the same, viz.:—As A is to B in point of merit, so must the share of A be

²⁹ ποία μεσότης ἐστὶν ἡ δικαιοσύνη, καὶ τὸ δίκαιον τίνων μέσον. 1129, a 3.

³⁰ τὸ γὰρ δίκαιον ἐν ταῖς νομαῖς ὁμολογοῦσι πάντες κατ' ἀξίαν τινα δεῖν εἶναι. 1131, a 25.

³¹ τὴν μέντοι ἀξίαν οὐ τὴν αὐτὴν λέγουσι πάντες, ἀλλ' οἱ μὲν δημοκρατικοὶ ἐλευθερίαν, οἱ δ' ὀλιγαρχικοὶ πλοῦτον, οἱ δ' εὐγένειαν, οἱ δ' ἀριστοκρατικοὶ ἀρετὴν. 1131, a 26.

to the share of B in point of value. This is a case of geometrical proportion, and the formula of distributive justice is therefore given by the formula $A : B :: a : b$, where A, B are the persons, and a, b their respective rewards. It will follow that $A : a :: B : b$, or that A's merit together with his share will or ought to be proportionate to B's merit together with his share.³³ When this rule is not observed there is dissension and complaint.

Take next the case where the common fund is constituted by the wealth of the country available for distribution amongst producers and consumers, and not merely by state property. The principle here is the same; as A is to B in respect of skill, labour and materials expended on his work, so will or ought to be the value receivable by A for his work out of the common fund of the country's wealth by the medium of exchange to the value receivable by B for his work out of the same fund by the same agency.³⁴ This case is complicated by the necessity of having to consider a medium of exchange, but the principle is the same.³⁵

³³ ἔσται ἄρα ὡς ὁ α ὅρος πρὸς τὸν β, οὕτως ὁ γ πρὸς τὸν δ, καὶ ἐναλλάξ ἄρα, ὡς ὁ α πρὸς τὸν γ, ὁ β πρὸς τὸν δ. ὥστε καὶ τὸ ὅλον πρὸς τὸ ὅλον· ὑπὲρ ἢ νομῇ συνδυνάζει, κἂν οὕτω συντεθῇ, δικαίως συνδυνάζει. ἢ ἄρα τοῦ α ὅρου τῷ γ καὶ ἢ τοῦ β τῷ δ σύζευξις τὸ ἐν διανομῇ δίκαιόν ἐστι, καὶ μέσον τὸ δίκαιον τοῦτ' ἐστί, κτέ. 1131, b 5.

³⁴ τὸ μὲν οὖν δίκαιον τοῦτο, τὸ ἀνάλογον· τὸ δ' ἄδικον τὸ παρὰ τὸ ἀνάλογον· γίνεται ἄρα τὸ μὲν πλεον τὸ δ' ἔλαττον, ὅπερ καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν ἔργων συμβαίνει. 1131, b 16.

³⁵ δεῖ οὖν λαμβάνειν τὸν οἰκοδόμον παρὰ τοῦ σκυτοτόμου τὸ ἐκείνου ἔργον, καὶ αὐτὸν ἐκείνῳ μεταδιδόναι τὸ αὐτοῦ, ἐὰν οὖν πρῶτον ἢ τὸ κατὰ τὴν ἀναλογίαν ἴσον, εἴτα τὸ ἀντι-

The rule by which equality, and therefore justice, is arrived at in the case of wrongs and contracts is different. In the former, the person who has committed the offence is said by a convenient stretch of language to be the gainer and the person who has been injured the loser,³⁶ and the law is said to endeavour to equalise matters by taking from the offender by way of penalty what he is supposed to have gained by his offence and giving it to the injured one in the form of a recompense for what he has suffered.³⁷ This process is described by Aristotle as arriving at a mean between the greater and the less by the rule of arithmetical proportion.³⁸

A line is supposed to be divided into unequal parts by the acts complained of, and equality is effected by taking from the larger part the exact amount by which it exceeds the lesser part and adding it to the latter. Aristotle admits that in the case of redress of wrongs it is straining the meaning of words to talk of gain and loss; but the difficulty is more than a verbal one. It would be impossible to work with such a rule in any tolerable system of criminal justice. A man tries to break into your house and is caught in the act. The

πεπονθὸς γένηται, ἔσται τὸ λεγόμενον. εἰ δὲ μή, οὐκ ἴσον, οὐδὲ συμμένει. 1133, a 8.

³⁶ Λέγεται γὰρ ὡς ἀπλῶς εἰπεῖν ἐπὶ τοῖς τοιούτοις, κἂν εἰ μή τισιν οἰκείον ὄνομα εἴη, τὸ κέρδος, οἷον τῷ πατάξαντι, καὶ ἡ ζημία τῷ παθόντι· ἀλλ' ὅταν γε μετρηθῇ τὸ πάθος, καλεῖται τὸ μὲν ζημία τὸ δὲ κέρδος. 1132, a 10.

³⁷ καὶ γὰρ ὕταν ὁ μὲν πληγῇ ὁ δὲ πατάξῃ, ἡ καὶ κτείνῃ, ὁ δ' ἀποθάνῃ, διήρηται τὸ πάθος καὶ ἡ πρᾶξις εἰς ἄνισα· ἀλλὰ πειρᾶται τῇ ζημίᾳ ἰσάζειν, ἀφαιρῶν τοῦ κέρδους. 1132, a 7.

³⁸ τὸ δ' ἴσον μέσον ἐστὶ τῆς μείζονος καὶ ἐλάττονος κατὰ τὴν ἀριθμητικὴν ἀναλογίαν. 1132, a 29.

burglar has gained nothing and you have lost nothing, and if, as Aristotle says, the law looks merely to the difference created by the injury,³⁹ it would have nothing to say in such a case. But Aristotle must have recognised that in the case of wrongs with violence the law goes beyond attempting to put the persons immediately affected in *statu quo*, and that the real injury to be redressed is that created by the insecurity of life and property which would result from crimes of violence going unpunished. A thief picks your pocket and extracts a handkerchief worth a shilling; is his punishment to be measured by your loss, and if so by what rule? What Aristotle says on this subject is the more surprising because the true theory of punishment had already been clearly and excellently laid down in one of the Platonic dialogues, not as a new theory but as one generally known and acted upon. "Malefactors are not punished," says Protagoras in the dialogue of that name, "because they have done wrong, since what is done cannot be undone,—they are punished with a view to the future, in order that neither the same man nor others who see him punished may again be guilty of similar wrong. Punishment is for the sake of prevention, and this is the view which everybody holds both as to public and private punishment;"⁴⁰ you are not hanged for stealing a horse, but that horses may not be stolen.

³⁹ πρὸς τοῦ βλάβους τὴν διαφορὰν μόνον βλέπει ὁ νόμος. 1132, a 4.

⁴⁰ οὐδεὶς γὰρ κολάζει τοὺς ἀδικοῦντας πρὸς τούτῳ τὸν νοῦν ἔχων καὶ τούτου ἕνεκα ὅτι ἡ δίκη σεν, ὅστις μὴ ὥσπερ θήριον ἀλογίστως τιμωρεῖται· ὁ δὲ μετὰ λόγου ἐπιχειρῶν κολάζειν οὐ τοῦ παρεληλυθότος ἕνεκα ἀδικήματος τιμωρεῖται—οὐ γὰρ ἂν τό γε πραχθὲν ἀγέννητον θείη—ἀλλὰ τοῦ μέλλοντος χάριν—ἵνα μὴ αὖθις ἀδικήσῃ μήτε αὐτὸς οὗτος, μήτε ἄλλος ὁ

Nor is the rule of arithmetical proportion more applicable to the case of contracts than to wrongs. A contracts to deliver so many bushels of wheat to B at a certain price and at a certain date, and breaks his contract. Aristotle assumes A to be a gainer by the breach and B a loser, and what the law ought to do is, he says, to take from A what he has gained and give it to B, and so make things equal. But A is not necessarily a gainer by the non-performance of his contract to deliver; the movement of the Athenian corn market may have been such that he is a loser by his inability to complete the transaction at the date fixed. In this case, there would be nothing for B to receive as damages for his broken contract under Aristotle's rule. But put it the other way and suppose A to have made money by failing to carry out the agreement; on what principle can his gain be considered the measure of B's loss? B may easily have lost more than A has gained, and we can scarcely believe that in a great commercial city like Athens any court or arbitrator would say: "A has broken his contract it is true, and he has gained 10 minæ by doing so; it appears also that B has lost 20 minæ by the breach, but that is irrelevant. Let A pay 10 minæ to B and then justice will be done." This would be the justice not of a court, but of a comic opera.

Aristotle concludes by observing that the words "gain and loss" applied by him to involuntary transactions are derived in fact from voluntary ones; to have more than you had at first is called "gain," and to have less is

τοῦτον ἰδὼν κολασθέντα. καὶ τοιαύτην διανοίαν ἔχων διανοεῖται παιδευτὴν εἶναι ἀρετὴν· ἀποτροπῆς γοῦν ἔνεκα κολάζει. ταύτην οὖν τὴν δόξαν πάντες ἔχουσιν, ὅσοι περ τιμωροῦνται καὶ ἰδίᾳ καὶ δημοσίᾳ. Protag. 324 A B C.

called "loss"; the expression is derived from business in the market—from cases where the law allows everybody to have a free hand—*i.e.* to make what he can. When, as the result of this freedom of action, the parties have neither more nor less than they had at first, they are said to have their own—they neither gain nor lose.⁴¹ But, (he implies without saying so here) gain and loss may also be considered to result from those involuntary transactions in which the law does not allow people to do as they like. Justice is, therefore, a mean between a kind of gain and a kind of loss, both in matters which are outside voluntary transactions and in those within it; it means "equality first and last."⁴²

CHAPTER 5.—This important chapter is opened by examining the view, attributed to the Pythagoreans, that justice is retaliation simply, that it consists in making the doer suffer the same kind (or the same degree) of injury as he has inflicted. But Aristotle soon passes from criticism of the Pythagoreans to consider the principles which govern justice in its other aspect as regulating the distribution of commodities, and thence to examine the function and value of currency in facilitating such a distribution. There are few chapters in the *Ethics* which

⁴¹ ἐλήλυθε δὲ τὰ ὀνόματα ταῦτα, ἣ τε ζημία καὶ τὸ κέρδος, ἐκ τῆς ἐκουσίου ἀλλαγῆς· τὸ μὲν γὰρ πλείον ἔχειν ἢ τὰ αὐτοῦ κερδαίνειν λέγεται, τὸ δ' ἔλαττον τῶν ἐξ ἀρχῆς ζημιοῦσθαι, οἷον ἐν τῷ ὠνεῖσθαι καὶ πωλεῖν καὶ ἐν ὅσοις ἄλλοις ἄδειαν δέδωκεν ὁ νόμος· ὅταν δὲ μήτε πλείον μήτ' ἔλαττον ἀλλ' αὐτὰ δι' αὐτῶν γένηται, τὰ αὐτῶν φασὶν ἔχειν καὶ οὔτε ζημιοῦσθαι οὔτε κερδαίνειν. 1132, b 11.

⁴² ὥστε κέρδους τινος καὶ ζημίας μέσον τὸ δίκαιόν ἐστι τῶν παρὰ τὸ ἐκούσιον, τὸ ἴσον ἔχειν καὶ πρότερον καὶ ὕστερον. 1132, b 18.

better repay a careful reading, or which require to be read more carefully.

Aristotle considers the rule of retaliation in relation to his own two divisions of justice, regulative and distributive, and decides that it will not fit either.⁴³

If we look to regulative justice, at least to that side of it which deals with what Aristotle distinguishes as involuntary transactions,⁴⁴ the rule that the wrong-doer should get what he has given, either in kind or amount (for that is what is really meant), will not do. If A has injured B by stealing his purse, no one would pretend that justice would be done by B injuring A by stealing his purse in return. Nor would the rule work out right if the principle of retribution were applied more generally. "If a magistrate orders a prisoner to be flogged," says Aristotle, "he ought not to be flogged himself; but if the prisoner thereupon assaults the judge he deserves to be flogged and something more."⁴⁵ We observe here that the law does not deal with the persons equally.

Again, it makes some difference whether an act be voluntary or not, but the Pythagorean rule does not allow for this.⁴⁶ So much for the application of the simple rule of "suffering in return" (*ἀντιπεπονθός*) to the involuntary side of regulative justice, on which it is to be

⁴³ τὸ δ' ἀντιπεπονθός οὐκ ἐφαρμόττει οὔτ' ἐπὶ τὸ νευητικὸν δίκαιον, οὔτ' ἐπὶ τὸ διορθωτικόν. 1132, b 23.

⁴⁴ τὸ διορθωτικόν, ὃ γίνεται ἐν τοῖς συναλλάγμασι τοῖς ἀκουσίοις. 1131, b 25.

⁴⁵ εἰ ἀρχὴν ἔχων ἐπάταξεν, οὐ δεῖ ἀντιπληγῆναι, καὶ εἰ ἄρχοντα ἐπάταξεν, οὐ πληγῆναι μόνον δεῖ ἀλλὰ καὶ κολασθῆναι. 1132, b 28.

⁴⁶ ἔτι τὸ ἐκούσιον καὶ τὸ ἀκούσιον διαφέρει πολὺ. 1132, b 30.

observed that Aristotle expresses no opinion on the theory of punishment or its adjustment to particular offences, confining himself to pointing out that the rule of simple retaliation is inapplicable. Nor does he say anything about the application of the principle to that branch of regulative justice which deals with voluntary transactions,⁴⁷ considering probably that the principle of tit for tat is so obviously out of the question here as to require no comment. But although retaliation will not do, a rule of justice based on the idea of retaliation (*τὸ τοιοῦτον δίκαιον*)—namely proportionate (not simple) reciprocity—will answer the purpose, both in cases of voluntary and involuntary transactions, and also in the case of distributive justice. “It is by reciprocal action that political communities subsist.”⁴⁸ “As to wrongs; if an injured person can get no proportionate redress, he is a slave.⁴⁹ As to benefits; without proportionate reciprocal action there can be no exchange.”⁵⁰

“It is by observing such a proportion whenever there comes to be a distribution out of a common fund or out of the equivalent of a common fund, whether the distribution be of commercial values or of honours, that states are preserved.”⁵¹

⁴⁷ ὃ γίνεται ἐν τοῖς συναλλάγμασι τοῖς ἐκουσίοις. 1131, b 25.

⁴⁸ τῷ ἀντιποιεῖν γὰρ ἀνάλογον συμμένει ἡ πόλις. 1132, b 33.

⁴⁹ ἢ γὰρ τὸ κακῶς ζητοῦσιν· εἰ δὲ μή, δουλεία δοκεῖ εἶναι [εἰ μὴ ἀντιποιήσει]. 1132, b 34.

⁵⁰ ἢ τὸ εὖ· εἰ δὲ μή, μετάδοσις οὐ γίνεται, τῇ μεταδόσει δὲ συμμένουσιν. 1133, a 1.

⁵¹ διόπερ τὸ ἴσον τὸ ἀντιπεπονθὸς σώζει τὰς πόλεις, ὥσπερ ἐν τοῖς ἠθικοῖς εἴρηται πρότερον. *Polit.* ii. 1. 1261, a 30.

If such a distribution were sought to be made on other principles there could not be that exchange of commodities which is absolutely necessary.

“In matters of exchange, then, in other words when the question is how persons unequal in respect of capacity or labour are to get what they deserve for the labour and capacity expended by each out of what may be regarded as a common fund, *i.e.* the wealth of the state—the total product of the labour and capacity of every member of it—in such a case the geometrical principle of reciprocal proportion is just. If it cost more to build a house than to make a pair of shoes, any fair exchange between a builder and a shoemaker will require, to begin with, that the product of their respective labours be equalised; and so of everything that is exchanged; they must first be reduced to terms which will enable them to be measured and compared,⁵² and then, and not until then, can their products be exchanged. Hence the use of money as a common measure; money, however, is merely the expression of demand; it is demand which gives to money its value as a medium of exchange, or, to put it in another way, “money is something conventionally exchanged against demand.”⁵³ If no one wanted anything, there would clearly be no exchange of commodities. But the demand for commodities, and therefore their value, varies. If there is no market, or no market in which the seller

⁵² ἐὰν οὖν πρῶτον ἡ τὸ κατὰ τὴν ἀναλογίαν ἴσον, εἴτα τὸ ἀντιπεπονθὸς γένηται, ἔσται τὸ λεγόμενον. 1133, a 10. διὸ πάντα συμβλητὰ δεῖ πῶς εἶναι ὧν ἐστὶν ἀλλαγή. 1133, a 19.

⁵³ τοῦτο δ' ἐστὶ τῇ μὲν ἀληθείᾳ ἢ χρεία, ἢ πάντα συνέχει· εἰ γὰρ μὴθὲν δέοιντο ἢ μὴ ὁμοίως, ἢ οὐκ ἔσται ἀλλαγὴ ἢ οὐκ ἡ αὐτή· οἷον δ' ὑπ' ἀλλαγμὰ τῆς χρείας τὸ νόμισμα γέγονε κατὰ συνθήκην. 1133, a 26.

and buyer choose to deal, commodities would be worthless." 54

"From this arise two important functions of money. It is something which can be exchanged against a present demand, and it is something which secures to its possessor the power of supplying his demands in the future." 55 Money is therefore a conventional measure of value, *i.e.* of wealth; 56 people might agree on anything for the purpose—cowries, copper discs, pieces of iron or paper, anything definite and reasonably portable, but the convenience of having something of intrinsic worth has led to the very general use of gold and silver, which, inasmuch as they are portable and pass readily from hand to hand (*εὐμεταχειρίστως*), and are not liable to extreme fluctuations in value, are the best media for the purpose. These points—that money is a commodity with a value as such, that it must be easily transferable, and that it tends to have the same value—are duly noted by Aristotle. 57 He

54 ὅτι δ' ἡ χρεία συνέχει ὥσπερ ἔν τι ὄν, δημοῖ ὅτι ὅταν μὴ ἐν χρεία ὦσιν ἀλλήλων, ἢ ἀμφοτέροι ἢ ἕτερος, οὐκ ἀλλάττονται. 1133, b 6.

55 ὑπὲρ δὲ τῆς μελλούσης ἀλλαγῆς, εἰ νῦν μηδὲν δεῖται, ὅτι ἔσται ἂν δεηθῇ, τὸ νόμισμα οἷον ἐγγνητῆς ἐσθ' ἡμῖν· δεῖ γὰρ τοῦτο φέρωντι εἶναι λαβεῖν. 1133, b 10.

56 διὰ τοῦτο τοῦνομα ἔχει νόμισμα, ὅτι οὐ φύσει ἀλλὰ νόμῳ ἐστί. 1133, a 30.

57 οὐ γὰρ εὐβάστακτον ἕκαστον τῶν κατὰ φύσιν ἀναγκαίων· διὸ πρὸς τὰς ἀλλαγὰς τοιοῦτόν τι συνέθεντο πρὸς σφᾶς αὐτοὺς διδόναι καὶ λαμβάνειν, ὅ τῶν χρησίμων αὐτὸ ὄν εἶχε τὴν χρείαν εὐμεταχειρίστον πρὸς τὸ ζῆν, οἷος σίδηρος καὶ ἄργυρος, καὶ εἴ τι τοιοῦτον ἕτερον. *Polit.* i. 9. 1257, a 34. πάσχει μὲν οὖν καὶ τοῦτο τὸ αὐτό· οὐ γὰρ ἀεὶ ἴσον δύναται· ὅμως δὲ βούλεται μένειν μᾶλλον. 1133, b 13.

was well aware that money is not wealth unless the substance selected happens to be valuable for some useful purpose.

But not only or principally is money useful as a measure of value, it is necessary as a medium of exchange in all but the rudest societies. Without it, the doctor would not be able to exchange with the shoemaker, nor the housebuilder with the tailor: Aristotle illustrates this use of money at some length, and he points out that the rule which governs, or should govern it, is one of reciprocal proportion. As A is to B in skill, labour and materials expended in his work, so must their respective products be valued against each other for purposes of exchange. To take Aristotle's own illustration, if a house reduced to the common measure of money is five minæ, and a bed similarly reduced one mina, five beds will exchange for one house. It is only by the device of having a medium of exchange that commodities of unequal value can be compared and the demand for them satisfied.⁵⁸ With what is here said on the subject of currency Aristotle's remarks in the first book of the Politics should be compared.⁵⁹ On his views there was no great advance until the eighteenth century.

It appears, then, that justice is a kind of mean, or to speak more correctly, "that it has to do with a mean," and that injustice has to do with extremes.⁶⁰ For we under-

⁵⁸ τῇ μὲν οὖν ἀληθείᾳ ἀδύνατον τὰ τοσοῦτον διαφέροντα σύμμετρα γενέσθαι, πρὸς δὲ τὴν χρεῖαν ἐνδέχεται ἱκανῶς. 1133, b 18.

⁵⁹ Polit. i. 9. 1257, a 34.

⁶⁰ ἡ δικαιοσύνη μεσότης τίς ἐστιν, οὗ τὸν αὐτὸν δὲ τρόπον ταῖς ἄλλαις ἀρεταῖς ἀλλ' ὅτι μέσου ἐστίν· ἡ δ' ἀδικία τῶν ἄκρων. 1133, b 32.

stand by a just man one who allocates to himself in relation to others, and to others in relation to others, *i.e.* in the two cases of distribution and adjustment, that which is proportionately equal,—equal in point of desirability—a less evil being a relative good; and we understand by an unjust man one who will assign to himself too much of that which is desirable and too little of what is undesirable. Injustice is therefore a kind of excess, that is, it has to do with too much and too little. Justice is, however, not a mean in the sense that courage or temperance are so; it is a middle between two fixed points, not an intermediate oscillating between opposite relative defects; it is a mean only in the sense that its extremes are given by its contrary, but it is certainly an equality, and there are cases, as when a definite thing can be halved, when equality and mean are the same thing.

Formally defined, justice may be said to be “a habit of mind causing a man deliberately to do what is fair as between himself and others, and also between others when he is not himself concerned—assigning in each case what by the rule of proportion he finds to be equal, neither too much nor too little.”⁶¹

CHAPTER 6.—Justice being a virtue of conduct, it is possible for a man to do an unjust thing without being unjust, as a man may be carried away by passion or circumstances to violate any other moral rule without being really immoral. But the acts which are called

⁶¹ ἡ μὲν δικαιοσύνη ἐστὶ καθ' ἣν ὁ δίκαιος λέγεται πρακτικὸς κατὰ προαίρεσιν τοῦ δικαίου, καὶ διανεμητικὸς καὶ αὐτῷ πρὸς ἄλλον καὶ ἐτέρῳ πρὸς ἕτερον οὐχ' οὕτως ὥστε τοῦ μὲν αἵρετοῦ πλέον αὐτῷ ἔλαττον δὲ τῷ πλήσιον, τοῦ βλαβεροῦ δ' ἀνάπαλιν, ἀλλὰ τοῦ ἴσου τοῦ κατ' ἀναλογίαν, ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ ἄλλῳ πρὸς ἄλλον. 1134, a 1.

just and unjust vary greatly in character; we call a man who does not restore a deposit unjust, and we apply the same term to a thief or a highwayman. Does this make any difference? ⁶² Aristotle says No; the rule already laid down for conduct in general—that its ethical value is determined by intention—applies to each and every case of injustice; to murder, robbery, adultery, as well as to breaking a contract or making an unfair distribution. Acts are in all cases morally valued by their intention. This premised, he goes on to remark on a case of so-called justice which is not the same with justice in its proper sense, because an unjust intention is from the nature of the case absent—the case, namely, of justice between father and son, and master and slave.⁶³

For we must not forget⁶⁴ that the subject of our inquiry is not only justice simply, but justice as we find it in the state, that which is civilly just.⁶⁵ This must be kept in mind, for there is another kind of justice determined by other rules than those which have been laid down and which may be called domestic justice.

Civil justice regulates conduct between those who live

⁶² ὁ ποῖα ἀδικήματα ἀδικῶν ἤδη ἄδικός ἐστιν ἐκάστην ἀδικίαν, οἷον κλέπτῃς ἢ μοιχὸς ἢ ληστής; ἢ οὕτω μὲν οὐδὲν διοίσει; 1134, a 17.

⁶³ τὸ δὲ δεσποτικὸν δίκαιον καὶ τὸ πατρικὸν οὐ τὰντὸν τοῦτοις ἀλλ' ὅμοιον—αὐτὸν δ' οὐδεὶς προαιρεῖται βλάπτειν. 1134, b 8, 11. The connection, not obvious at first sight, between the first three paragraphs of this chapter and the rest, is to be found in the προαίρεσις of 1134, a 20 and the οὐδεὶς προαιρεῖται βλάπτειν of 1134, b 12.

⁶⁴ δεῖ δὲ μὴ λανθάνειν ὅτι τὸ ζητούμενόν ἐστι καὶ τὸ ἀπλῶς δίκαιον καὶ τὸ πολιτικὸν δίκαιον. 1134, a 25.

⁶⁵ Sections 1–3 of this chapter, 1134, a 17–24, relate to the subject of Chapter 8.

together with a view to a complete and self-sufficing life—free men equal either in number or in proportionate merit; ⁶⁶ those of whom this cannot be said are not within the sphere of civil justice, but of a kind of metaphorical justice hereafter described. Justice, strictly so-called, is applicable to those whose lives are regulated by law, and law applies to those who break it; mankind requires some authority to discriminate between the habit of giving themselves too much of the good things, and too little of the bad things, of life.⁶⁷ The tendency to do this is so strong that no one can be trusted

⁶⁶ ἐπὶ κοινωνῶν βίου πρὸς τὸ εἶναι αὐτάρκειαν, ἐλευθέρων καὶ ἴσων ἢ κατ' ἀναλογίαν ἢ κατ' ἀριζμόν. 1134, a 26.

⁶⁷ 1134, a 30. ἔστι γὰρ δίκαιον, οἷς καὶ νόμος πρὸς αὐτοὺς· νόμος δ', ἐν οἷς ἀδικία. Sensitive persons are pained by the suggestion that the function of law is to correct wrong; they say that social order is not a system of police; Aristotle, however, is here dealing with that portion of social order which is represented by positive law, and as a fact positive law is, not exclusively, but greatly and perhaps principally, occupied in redressing the inequalities arising from the failure of the members of a society to discharge their duties to society or to one another. Criminal law is wholly so occupied; it is impossible to say to what extent law which does not deal with crime has this object, as there are no statistics on the subject, but undoubtedly most civil litigation is remedial.

“Quæritur ut crescent tam magna volumina legis?

In promptu causa est—crescit in orbe dolus.”

The experience of practical lawyers would probably bear out Aristotle's view that if there were no injustice there would be very little positive law.

with absolute power, for he will be sure to abuse it. The ruler must therefore rule according to law, and if so, justly, and if so, equally. Justice has therefore been called "the good of others," because "the just ruler does not make use of his power to give himself more absolute goods than proportionately belong to him, and hence may be said to work for others." ⁶⁸

"What has been called domestic justice—justice exercised by a master towards his slaves, or by a father to his children, differs from this, for no one intentionally hurts himself, and his property is part of himself; now a slave is his property, and so is his child until he is of an age to be independent.⁶⁹ There can be no civil justice in this case, for as has been said, civil justice rests on law, and this implies an equal right to take part in government—to rule and be ruled.⁷⁰ The wife has some share in management of the house and family, and therefore the justice between husband and wife is more like justice between citizen and citizen than the other kinds of family justice; still it is not the same: it may be called "Household justice." ⁷¹

CHAPTER 7.—Aristotle in the preceding chapter having divided justice in the proper sense of the word, *i.e.* justice as it exists between the members of a state, into

⁶⁸ οὐ γὰρ νέμει πλέον τοῦ ἀπλῶς ἀγαθοῦ αὐτῷ, εἰ μὴ πρὸς αὐτὸν ἀνάλογόν ἐστιν· διὸ ἐτερῷ πονεῖ. 1134, b 3.

⁶⁹ οὐ γὰρ ἔστιν ἀδικία πρὸς τὰ αὐτοῦ ἀπλῶς, τὸ δὲ κτῆμα καὶ τὸ τέκνον, ἕως ἄν ᾗ πηλίκον καὶ χωρισθῇ, ὥσπερ μέρος αὐτοῦ, αὐτὸν δ' οὐδεὶς προαιρεῖται βλάπτειν. 1134, b 9.

⁷⁰ κατὰ νόμον γὰρ ἦν, καὶ ἐν οἷς ἐπεφύκει εἶναι νόμος, οὔτοι δ' ἦσαν οἷς ὑπάρχει ἰσότης τοῦ ἄρχειν καὶ ἄρχεσθαι. 1134, b 13.

⁷¹ 1134, b 16.

civil justice (πολιτικὸν δίκαιον) and justice in the domestic relations, now proceeds to subdivide civil justice into two parts. He says that one part is "natural," that is, having the same force everywhere and not resting on custom, whilst the other part is conventional, that is, originally indifferent, but becoming authoritative when law or custom have pronounced it.⁷² "Some have thought," he adds, "that all civil justice is conventional because they see that that which is natural is unchangeable and has the same force everywhere, just as fire burns both here and in Persia, whereas 'things just' are liable to be changed." Aristotle proceeds to deal with this statement. As his reasoning is somewhat difficult to follow, it will be better to give it in his own words. This is how he puts it: "This will not hold, still it is true with a modification; ⁷³ with the gods perhaps it is never true, with ourselves there is such a thing as natural justice,—still all justice is variable; yet for all that there is such a thing as natural justice as well as justice which is not by nature. Of things contingent, what kind exists by nature and what does not, but depends on custom and convention, if indeed both are similarly variable, is obvious. In other cases, too, the same distinction will apply; naturally the right hand is the stronger, although every one may become ambidextrous.

"Things conventionally just, things which depend on convenience, are like weights and measures; the measures of wine and corn are not everywhere of equal capacity—

⁷² τοῦ δὲ πολιτικοῦ δικαίου τὸ μὲν φυσικόν ἐστι τὸ δὲ νομικόν· φυσικὸν μὲν τὸ πανταχοῦ τὴν αὐτὴν ἔχον δύναμιν, καὶ οὐ τῷ δοκεῖν ἢ μὴ, νομικὸν δὲ ὃ ἐξ ἀρχῆς μὲν οὐδὲν διαφέρει οὕτως ἢ ἄλλως, ὅταν δὲ θῶνται, διαφέρει. 1134, b 18.

⁷³ τοῦτο δ' οὐκ ἔστιν οὕτως ἔχον, ἀλλ' ἔστιν ὥς.—1134, b 27.

where retail dealers buy they are larger, and where they sell smaller; ⁷⁴ and similarly the justice which depends not on nature but on man is not everywhere the same any more than political constitutions are the same, although there is one form of constitution, and only one, which is according to nature and is everywhere the best.⁷⁵

“General conceptions of what is just and according to law stand to the cases falling under them as universals to particulars—things done are many but things just are one, for they are universal propositions.” ⁷⁶

Such is Aristotle's demonstration of natural justice as we find it in the text, and every reader must be left to make what he can of it. It is probable that when Aristotle was lecturing on the subject he did not express himself as clearly as might be desired, and that the reporter to whom we are indebted for what he said, not understanding him, has made confusion twice confounded. But if it be thought necessary to extract a definite meaning out of the passage, we had better accept Heliodorus' way of putting it. “If men live good and wholesome lives,” he

⁷⁴ οὐ γὰρ πανταχοῦ ἴσα τὰ οἰνηρὰ καὶ σιτηρὰ μέτρα, ἀλλ' οὗ μὲν ὠνοῦνται, μείζω, οὗ δὲ πωλοῦσιν, ἐλάττω. 1135, a 1.

⁷⁵ This assertion of one natural and universally best constitution is not consistent with the theory of the state developed in the Politics. There, the best constitution is said to depend on circumstances; if the question arises how the justest and best laws are to be framed, we are told to look to what is expedient for the state as a whole (πρὸς τὸ τῆς πόλεως ὅλης σύμφερον. 1283, b). But that which is expedient is neither invariable in a given case, or applicable universally to all cases.

⁷⁶ τῶν δὲ δικαίων καὶ νομίμων ἕκαστον ὡς τὰ καθόλου πρὸς τὰ καθ' ἕκαστα ἔχει· τὰ μὲν γὰρ πραττόμενα πολλά, ἐκείνων δὲ ἕκαστον ἓν· καθόλου γὰρ. 1135, a 5.

says, "there is a justice which is always the same and this is called 'natural justice'; nor is it less entitled to be so called because men of perverted natures do not follow or accept it, but have a conventional justice of their own suited to their inferior dispositions. Honey is not less sweet because diseased palates do not find it so. That justice which profits all good men and which prevails in the one perfect civil community is natural or absolute, any other is conventional. People may if they choose use their left hand instead of their right—but the right hand is nevertheless naturally stronger."⁷⁷ Aristotle may perhaps have meant this, but he has certainly not said so.

Readers who remember what was said in the first chapter of the second book of the Ethics as to the genesis of moral virtue,—that it comes to us through habit and that no one of the moral virtues is naturally inbred in us, because that which exists by nature is not to be modified by habit,⁷⁸—will be surprised to find Aristotle in this chapter assuming the existence of a natural justice whose characteristic is that it is always and everywhere the same; of a justice which does not conform to that part of the definition of good conduct which asserts it to be a habit produced by repeated acts and therefore taking its shape and colour from those acts. Nor is there anything in the Ethics which explains the inconsistency. It is

⁷⁷ Heliodorus, p. 182. 9; edit. Heylbut. The assumption that the right hand is naturally stronger, made by Aristotle (*φύσει γὰρ ἡ δεξιὰ κρείττων*. 1134, b 33) and repeated by Heliodorus, gives a measure of the argument for natural justice.

⁷⁸ *δῆλον ὅτι οὐδεμία τῶν ἠθικῶν ἀρετῶν φύσει ἡμῖν ἐγγίνεται*. 1103, a 18.

true that in the passage referred to Aristotle says that although the virtues of conduct do not arise by nature they do not arise against her will; that we have a natural capacity to receive them, but that they are brought to their full growth as the result of habit.⁷⁹ It is also true that in the thirteenth chapter of the sixth book where natural virtue is spoken of in relation to complete virtue,⁸⁰ that we are told that the universal opinion is that each one of the virtues of conduct belong to us "in a way" by nature. But in both passages the same thing is meant, although in the former it is negatively and in the latter positively put—namely that we are so constituted by nature as to have the capacity of forming habits, and that we have an inbred tendency towards habits of a particular kind.⁸¹ But neither passage suggests the existence of a completely developed virtue of conduct as the result of an effort of nature and distinct from a virtue of the same kind as the result of habit. But if we turn to the Rhetoric it would seem that Aristotle must have meant what he certainly appears to say in the chapter before us, namely that there is a natural, universal and invariable justice as well as a conventional, partial and changeable one. We read "there is by nature a universal 'just' and 'unjust' divined by every one and existing in the absence either of civil life or of convention,"⁸² and he cites as an example of this

79 οὐτ' ἄρα φύσει οὔτε παρὰ φύσιν ἐγγίνονται αἱ ἀρεταί, ἀλλὰ πεφυκόσι μὲν ἡμῖν δέξασθαι αὐτάς, τελουμένοις δὲ διὰ τοῦ ἔθους. 1103, a 23.

80 ἡ φυσικὴ ἀρετὴ πρὸς τὴν κυρίαν. Eth. 6. 13. 1144, b 3.

81 ἄλλοι πρὸς ἄλλα πεφύκαμεν. 1109, b 2.

82 ἔστι γὰρ ὁ μαντεύονταί τι πάντες, φύσει κοινὸν δίκαιον καὶ ἄδικον, κἂν μηδεμία κοινωνία πρὸς ἀλλήλους ἢ μηδὲ συνθήκη. Rhet. 1. 13. 1373, b 6.

universal law of justice the case in the *Antigonê* of Sophokles of the duty of blood relations to bury their dead; "this," he says, "is by nature just."

It is remarkable that Aristotle, who has traced quite correctly the genesis of moral conduct, should have been carried away by the poetic fiction of a natural justice, and still more so that he should never have inquired whether the case which he cites possesses any authority or not. That the members of a family should bury their dead is an obligation deeply felt and widely spread, but it is very far from being universally recognised as a duty, and it is in no possible sense a law of nature. Aristotle cannot be blamed for not knowing the numerous instances of its violation which have been collected by modern travellers, but he might well have known the case cited by Herodotus. It appears that an Indian tribe called *Kallatiæ* used to eat their dead relations instead of burying or burning them. Now when Darius was king he summoned some Greeks who happened to be present and asked them "for what sum they would eat their fathers after death"; to which they replied that "they would not do it for any sum he could name." On which he asked some members of the tribe named, and in the presence of the same Greeks asked them "what money they would take to burn their deceased fathers with fire," and the Indians, with a cry of horror, begged him to hold his tongue. Herodotus adds the following comment: "It appears to me that Pindar was right when he said that custom is king of all." ⁸³

If Aristotle, contrary to his own principles, has lent

⁸³ ἀμβώσαντες μέγα, εὐφημέειν μιν ἐκέλευον. οὕτω μὲν νυν ταῦτα νερόμισται· καὶ ὁρῶς μοι δοκεῖ Πίνδαρος ποιῆσαι, νόμον πάντων βασιλέα φήσας εἶναι. Herod. 3. 38.

his authority to the belief that in morals there is something always and everywhere right, we must excuse him for supporting a fiction which some writers even in the present day have not been able to get rid of. But those who maintain the doctrine of natural justice may fairly be asked to point out any single rule of conduct, positive or negative, on which the whole world is and has always been agreed.⁸⁴ Until that has been done justice may be allowed to keep its place with the other virtues as an indefinite right taking its shape, like the leaden rule of the Lesbian builders, from the nature of the circumstances in which it is applied.

CHAPTER 8.—In discussing the distinction between voluntary and involuntary actions in the third book Aristotle had pointed out that the difference was one which not only the moral philosopher was bound to bear in mind, but which the legislator would find useful when he had to assign rewards and punishments.⁸⁵ It will be remembered that an involuntary act, properly so called, was defined as one due to external force;⁸⁶ neither moral compulsion, however strong, nor the influence of anger or desire sufficing to bring acts done under their influence within the class of involuntary actions. But it was also pointed out that acts might be classed as involuntary if done in ignorance of material surrounding facts which the agent was not bound to know, provided the act is after-

⁸⁴ τὸ πανταχοῦ τὴν αὐτὴν ἔχον δύναμιν. 1134, b 19.

⁸⁵ ἀναγκαῖον διορίσαι τοῖς περὶ ἀρετῆς ἐπισκοποῦσι, χρήσιμον δὲ καὶ τοῖς νομοθετοῦσι πρὸς τε τὰς τίμας καὶ τὰς κολάσεις. 1109, b 33.

⁸⁶ ὁπότ' ἂν ἡ αἰτία ἐν τοῖς ἐκτὸς ᾗ καὶ ὁ πράττων μηδὲν συμβάλλῃται. 1110, b 2.

wards regretted ;⁸⁷ voluntary acts on the other hand being those proceeding from the agent himself acting with full knowledge of all the particular circumstances in which he acts.⁸⁸ But reprehensible ignorance—ignorance of what all reasonable people know, or might know but for their own fault—is morally the same as positive knowledge. All these distinctions Aristotle tells us apply to the case of justice to the same extent and with the limitations applicable to the other virtues of conduct. Notwithstanding that the rule of justice is stated in mathematical formulæ, if a man acts involuntarily he cannot be said to be either just or unjust.⁸⁹ The test of moral conduct in general—praise or blame—must therefore be applied to justice; if an act be voluntary and also blamed it is unjust without more.⁹⁰ An act induced by force is not one which a criminal court would punish; an act the result of misapprehension would be punishable or not according to the nature of the misapprehension. Aristotle's language also implies that an involuntary act would not, or at least ought not, to give rise to a civil remedy; and that neither the distribution of honour, money or other goods whether by the public authority or in the way of commercial exchange, nor an act of regulative justice, can be called just, even if satisfying the rules of geometrical and arithmetical proportions, unless those acts are also

⁸⁷ 1111, a 19.

⁸⁸ τὸ ἐκούσιον δόξειεν ἂν εἶναι οὗ ἢ ἀρχὴ ἐν αὐτῷ εἰδότες τὰ καθ' ἕκαστα ἐν οἷς ἢ πράξις. 1111, a 23.

⁸⁹ ὄντων δὲ τῶν δικαίων καὶ ἀδίκων τῶν εἰρημένων, ἀδικεῖ μὲν καὶ δικαιοπραγεῖ ὅταν ἐκὼν τις αὐτὰ πράττῃ· ὅταν δ' ἄκων, οὐτ' ἀδικεῖ οὔτε δικαιοπραγεῖ ἀλλ' ἢ κατὰ συμβεβηκός. 1135, a 15.

⁹⁰ ὅταν ἐκούσιον ᾖ, ψέγεται, ἅμα δὲ καὶ ἀδίκημα τότε ἐστίν. 1135, a 20.

voluntary; that is the dividing line.⁹¹ For purposes of justice, therefore, an act not intended is not an act at all. How far this is really true will be presently considered. He adds that a further distinction is to be made between voluntary actions which are the result of previous deliberation and those which are not. On the basis of these distinctions, actions occasioning loss in the general intercourse of mankind⁹² meaning, it would seem, actions which by violating the rules either of distributive or regulative justice occasion loss in the wide sense given to the word, may be placed in the following classes:—

1. *Accidents* (ἀτυχήματα); where the act is non-voluntary and its consequences contrary to expectation, and where the cause of the damage may therefore be said to be something outside⁹³; as where A injures B by the accidental bursting of a gun which he was properly using and had good grounds for believing to be safe.

2. *Mistakes* (ἁμαρτήματα); where the act is non-voluntary and free from any bad intent, but its consequences are or ought to have been foreseen; where consequently the cause of the damage may be said to be the person occasioning it⁹⁴; as where A injures B by the bursting of a gun which he had overcharged.

3. *Unpremeditated wrongs* (ἀδικήματα); acts voluntary in the strict sense of the word but not deliberately

⁹¹ ἀδίκημα δὲ καὶ δικαιοπραγία ὥρισται τῷ ἐκουσίῳ καὶ ἀκουσίῳ. 1135, a 19.

⁹² βλάβαι ἐν ταῖς κοινωνίαις. 1135, b 11.

⁹³ ὅταν παραλόγως ἢ βλάβη γένηται—καὶ ἡ ἀρχὴ τῆς αἰτίας ἕξωθεν ᾗ. 1135, b 16–19.

⁹⁴ ὅταν μὴ παραλόγως, ἀνευ δὲ κακίας, καὶ ἡ ἀρχὴ ἐν αὐτῷ ᾗ τῆς αἰτίας. 1135, b 17.

planned,⁹⁵ as where A kills B in a sudden fit of anger or jealousy; manslaughter.

4. *Premeditated wrongs* (μοχθηρία); as where A lays his plans to kill B and does so; murder.⁹⁶

All these distinctions must be attended to by the legislator if his laws are to be just, and also by those who apply the rules of geometrical and arithmetical proportion to the cases falling within those respective rules. For instance, in the case of unpremeditated wrongs justice requires you to take into account whether an admitted injury has been done under the influence of anger or not; anger is a protest against a seeming wrong,⁹⁷ and it would hardly be just not to make allowance for resenting an apparent injustice. Deliberate injury, however, is inexcusable, and in every sense unjust.

Allowance must also be made for accidents and mistakes; except that in the latter case if your ignorance be of a kind for which you can be properly held responsible you are not to be excused.⁹⁸

CHAPTER 9.—“Now if, as we have seen, a man cannot be said to do injustice unless he act voluntarily, does it follow that when an injustice is done to him it is, as regards him, voluntary too? Then, is having injustice done to you necessarily either voluntary or involuntary in every case, or may it be either,⁹⁹ and so of having justice done to you? it is only reasonable that what is true of the one

⁹⁵ εἰδὼς μὲν μὴ προβουλεύσας δέ. 1135, b 20.

⁹⁶ ὅταν δ' ἐκ προαιρέσεως, ἄδικος καὶ μοχθηρός. 1135, b 25.

⁹⁷ ἐπὶ φαινομένη γὰρ ἀδικίᾳ ἡ ὀργή ἐστιν. 1135, b 28.

⁹⁸ ἀγνοοῦντες μὲν διὰ πάθος δὲ μήτε φυσικὸν μήτ' ἀνθρώπινον, οὐ συγγνωμονικά. 1136, a 8.

⁹⁹ ἄρα πᾶν οὕτως ἢ ἐκείνως ἢ τὸ μὲν ἐκούσιον τὸ δ' ἀκούσιον; 1136, a 16.

should be true of the other.¹⁰⁰ But as there are certainly cases in which justice is done to you without your consent, if what is true of the one is true of the other, there will be cases in which injustice is done to you without your consent. Next, is every person who suffers a wrong wronged? Or is the rule the same when you are passive as when you are active? If so, then as you may accidentally do wrong without being a wrong-doer, so you may accidentally suffer wrong without being wronged.¹⁰¹ If we can say without qualification that doing injustice consists in knowingly inflicting harm, we can also say that the man who knowingly suffers harm from his own acts, has injustice done to him. But can we say this without qualification? or must we not add 'contrary to his wish'? for no one desires to be harmed; he does things which injure him contrary to his desire.¹⁰² Nor is the case of Glaucon and Diomedês in point; no injustice was there done; there must be some one to inflict the injury, and this was certainly not Diomedês, nor was it Glaucon himself, for Glaucon parted with his own property voluntarily as he had a right to do. It may have been foolish, but it was not unjust. The conclusion must be that no one can be injured with his own consent."

This discussion has no practical value except for the purpose of sharpening the wits by dialectics; it may be

¹⁰⁰ εὐλογον ἀντικεῖσθαι ὁμοίως καθ' ἑκάτερον, τό τ' ἀδικεῖσθαι καὶ δικαιοῦσθαι ἢ ἐκούσιον ἢ ἀκούσιον εἶναι. 1136, a 19.

¹⁰¹ κατὰ συμβεβηκὸς ἐνδέχεται ἐπ' ἀμφοτέρων μεταλαμβάνειν τῶν δικαίων. 1136, a 25.

¹⁰² προσθετόν τῃ βλάβπτειν εἰδότα καὶ ὄν καὶ ᾧ καὶ ὡς τὸ παρὰ τὴν ἐκείνου βούλησιν. 1136, b 3.

doubted whether it have any value at all. It was one of those debating society questions which the clever and talkative Greeks were so fond of. As a rule people are annoyed when their conduct causes them harm; they also very much dislike to be wronged by others, and this dislike furnishes a large part of the litigation of countries fortunate enough to possess courts and lawyers. But the rule is not invariable. There are people who deliberately elect to have what they consider an injustice done to them; they court and enjoy it in order that they may appear to be martyrs and by this means attract sympathy for themselves or their beliefs—especially if their own money expenditure is small and the reputation they gain considerable—*εἰ μικρὰ ἀναλώσαντες μεγάλα κτήσονται*.

Aristotle proceeds: "Two points were mentioned for consideration; whether the man who allocates to another more than fairly belongs to that other, or the receiver of the unequal share is really the unjust man, and whether it be possible for a man to be unjust to himself? As to the former; if the distributor who does less than justice to himself and more than justice to another be a wrong-doer, then he who voluntarily gives up what strictly belongs to himself is unjust. But this is exactly what a moderate and equitable man will do; he is always on the losing side.¹⁰³ But it is too absolute a way of putting it to say that the man who gets less than his share is a loser; it may happen that he gains some other good—reputation or something else of value. Even if this were not so, it is like the case of Glaucon, he is a consenting party, so that at the most it is a *damnum absque injuria*.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰³ ὁ γὰρ ἐπικρῆς ἐλαττωτικός ἐστιν. 1136, b 20.

¹⁰⁴ ἢ οὐδὲ τοῦτο ἀπλοῦν;—οὐδὲν γὰρ παρὰ τὴν αὐτοῦ

Remember, too, the distinction between doing an unjust act and being unjust; a judge who gives an unjust decision, meaning by that a decision which cannot be supported on the facts of the case, may have done so in ignorance of those facts (*ἀγνοῶν ἔκρινεν*); if so the decision may be strictly right, for it is the duty of the parties to bring the facts before the court; what is right in law being often wrong in reality, if you look to undisclosed evidence." ¹⁰⁵

"But the way to test whether the man who makes an unfair distribution or gives an unjust decision is unjust or not is to suppose him to have acted on full knowledge; for in a civil suit he will be pretty sure to have got consideration of some kind from the party for whose benefit he has deliberately judged wrongly, and in a criminal prosecution he may have had the satisfaction of gratifying his feelings by giving an excessive punishment.¹⁰⁶ He will get more than his

πάσχει βούλησιν, ὥστε οὐκ ἀδικεῖται διὰ γε τοῦτο, ἀλλ' εἶπερ, βλάπτεται μόνον. 1136, b 21.

¹⁰⁵ ἔτι εἰ μὲν ἀγνοῶν ἔκρινεν, οὐκ ἀδικεῖ κατὰ τὸ νομικὸν δίκαιον—ἔστι δ' ὥς ἀδικός· ἕτερον γὰρ τὸ νομικὸν δίκαιον καὶ τὸ πρῶτον. 1136, b 32. τὸ πρῶτον is sometimes translated "natural justice"; but the distinction is not between legal and natural justice, but between justice on the facts as presented, and justice on the facts supposing them to have been fully presented. τὸ πρῶτον refers to ἀγνοῶν, or rather to the distinction implied in ἀγνοῶν, between imperfect and perfect evidence. A decision right on the facts may be wrong, but it is not unjust, for it is the business of the parties to get up their case.

¹⁰⁶ εἰ δὲ γιγώσκων ἔκρινεν ἀδίκως, πλεονεκτεῖ καὶ αὐτὸς ἡ χάριτος ἡ τιμωρίας. ὥσπερ οὖν κἂν εἴ τις μερίσαιο τοῦ ἀδίκηματος, καὶ ὁ διὰ ταῦτα κρίνας ἀδίκως πλεόν ἔχει· καὶ γὰρ

share in one way or another. It is sometimes thought that it is an easy thing to be just. This is an error.¹⁰⁷ Justice is in part a matter of technical knowledge and in part a matter of habit and disposition."

"To refer to its technical side; it is easy enough to give a haphazard decision, but to weigh the circumstances, to apply the law—some people go so far as to say that it is not hard to understand the law—is even more difficult than to write a good prescription or to decide on the proper operation and perform it.¹⁰⁸ But although justice involves and requires art it is not merely an art.¹⁰⁹ If it were it would follow, as Sokrates argued, that a perfectly just man would make a good thief; much more important is the habit of justice, and this can only be acquired by constant practice in doing it. Notice, finally, that the sphere of justice lies amongst those with whom it is possible to have too much and too little of things which are in themselves desirable. We may conceive those

ἐπ' ἐκείνῳ τὸν ἄγρον κρίνας οὐκ ἄγρον ἀλλ' ἀργύριον ἔλαβεν. 1136, b 34. In Athens the jurors—the members of the Heliastic assembly—were judges both of law and fact, and they determined the punishment or damages.

¹⁰⁷ οἱ δ' ἄνθρωποι ἐφ' ἑαυτοῖς οἴονται εἶναι τὸ ἀδικεῖν· διὸ καὶ τὸ δίκαιον εἶναι ῥᾷδιον. τὸ δ' οὐκ ἔστιν. 1137, a 4.

¹⁰⁸ ἀλλὰ πῶς πραττόμενα καὶ πῶς νεμόμενα δίκαια, τοῦτο δὴ πλεόν ἔργον ἢ τὰ ὑγίεινὰ εἰδέναι· ἐπεὶ κακεῖ μέλι καὶ οἶνον καὶ ἑλλέβορον καὶ καῦσιν καὶ τομὴν εἰδέναι ῥᾷδιον, ἀλλὰ πῶς δεῖ νεῖμαι πρὸς ὑγίειαν καὶ τίνι καὶ πότε, τουοῦτον ἔργον ὅσον ἵατρον εἶναι. 1137, a 12.

¹⁰⁹ ἀλλὰ τὸ δειλαίνειν καὶ ἀδικεῖν οὐ τὸ ταῦτα ποιεῖν ἐστι, πλὴν κατὰ συμβεβηκός, ἀλλὰ τὸ ὥδι ἔχοντα ταῦτα ποιεῖν, ὥσπερ καὶ τὸ ἱατρεύειν καὶ τὸ ὑγιάζειν οὐ τὸ τέμνειν ἢ μὴ τέμνειν ἢ φαρμακεύειν ἢ μὴ φαρμακεύειν ἐστίν, ἀλλὰ τὸ ὥδι. 1137, a 21.

(possibly the gods) who cannot have too much of absolute goods, and there are those (as for instance the hopelessly bad) who can have no good at all, but who are harmed by everything; ordinary human nature lies between these extremes and this is the true sphere of justice."¹¹⁰

Aristotle's object in the ninth chapter is to advance the argument already urged in the eighth that justice, notwithstanding its apparently scientific and technical character, is neither a science nor an art, as Sokrates supposed, but a moral virtue to be judged, like other moral virtues, by intention and uniformity of action, and not by conformity to technical rule. A magistrate is called just in two senses; he is just if he knows the law and applies it correctly and impartially to the facts before him. That is the Sokratic sense, but not the moral one. Aristotle insists that he is only just if, technical qualifications supposed, his habit and mental attitude is to be fair *quand même*, for the mere sake of being so. Take an imaginary case. Suppose a magistrate to do his best always to keep his temper, always to listen to evidence and arguments and to be right in his law, but suppose also that his object is to increase his reputation so that he may get promotion; he would be seeking more than his due share of advancement, he would be looking for his reward, not indeed to the suitor, but to the public in the form of a better and more lucrative position, and he would be, in a sense, an unjust judge. This is perhaps to set a standard which human nature cannot

¹¹⁰ ἔστι δὲ τὰ δίκαια ἐν τούτοις οἷς μέτεστι τῶν ἀπλῶς ἀγαθῶν, ἔχουσι δ' ὑπερβολὴν ἐν τούτοις καὶ ἑλλειψιν. 1137, a 26.

be expected often to reach ; it is an approach to absolute morals.

CHAPTER 10.—We now come to that form of justice called equity. The general conception of justice is that it is according to law and that it is equality, but the two do not always coincide ; what must we say when they differ ? “ When we are not comparing equity with law we call equitable conduct ‘ good ’ by a metaphor, clearly implying that equity itself is good.¹¹¹ But when we compare equity with law we see that it differs from it, and this creates a difficulty, for it seems to follow either that law is not good or that equity is not law, or if we call both good, that they are the same thing. But there is really ¹¹² no difficulty and no real opposition ; law and equity are species falling under the same genus, they are varieties of that kind of conduct which we call by the general name of justice ; they differ no doubt, and so far as they differ equity is better than law, but that difference does not disentitle both to be called by the generic name ; it is not as if equity were better than law and different in kind—in that case the common name ‘ just ’ would not be properly applicable.¹¹³ If we look to the nature of law we shall see how the difficulty created by the difference between law and equity arises. Law has to express itself in general terms ; now there are cases

¹¹¹ ἐπὶ τὰ ἄλλα ἐπαινοῦντες μεταφέρομεν ἀντὶ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ, τὸ ἐπιεικέστερον ὅτι βέλτιον δηλοῦντες. 1137, a 35.

¹¹² ἔχει δ' ἅπαντα τρόπον τινὰ ὁρθῶς καὶ οὐδὲν ὑπεναντίον ἑαυτοῖς. 1137, b 7.

¹¹³ τό τε γὰρ ἐπιεικὲς δικαίου τινὸς ὃν βέλτιόν ἐστι δίκαιον, καὶ οὐκ ὡς ἄλλο τι γένος ὃν βέλτιόν ἐστι τοῦ δικαίου. 1137, b, 8.

to which those general terms are inapplicable, as the law maker well knows, but he takes the majority of cases and legislates for them,¹¹⁴ and he is justified in so doing, for it is not his fault that human conduct, the subject matter of his art (ἡ τῶν πράκτων ὕλη), is so complicated that it cannot be covered by general rules. When cases of this kind occur it is only right to correct the defect arising from the excessive generality in which the law is expressed—in fact to do what the law giver, if he were on the spot and knew the circumstances, would himself have done.¹¹⁵ It is the function of equity to do this; its nature is to correct the law where the latter fails owing to its universality.¹¹⁶ It is for this reason that everything cannot be provided for by law and that sometimes we must have a decree or a resolution; indefinite circumstances require a flexible rule like the leaden one used by Lesbian builders,¹¹⁷ adapted to the shape of the stone used. This being the nature of equity, we see at once the character of the equitable man. He will not insist on his legal rights where it would be hard to do so, but will make concessions although the law is on his side.”¹¹⁸

¹¹⁴ τὸ ὥς ἐπὶ τὸ πλεον λαμβάνει ὁ νόμος, οὐκ ἀγνοῶν τὸ ἀμαρτανόμενον. 1137, b 15.

¹¹⁵ ἐπανορθοῦν τὸ ἐλλειφθέν, ὃ καὶν ὁ νομοθέτης αὐτὸς ἂν εἶπεν ἐκεῖ παρών, καὶ εἰ ἤδει, ἐνομοθέτησεν. 1137, b 22.

¹¹⁶ καὶ ἔστιν αὕτη ἡ φύσις τοῦ ἐπεικοῦς, ἐπανόρθωμα νόμου, ᾧ ἐλλείπει διὰ τὸ καθόλου. 1137, b 36.

¹¹⁷ τοῦ γὰρ ἀορίστου ἀόριστος καὶ ὁ κανὼν ἐστιν, ὥσπερ καὶ τῆς Λεσβίας οἰκοδομίας ὁ μολίβδινος κανὼν. 1137, b 29.

¹¹⁸ ὁ μὴ ἀκριβοδίκαιος ἐπὶ τὸ χεῖρον ἀλλ' ἐλαττωτικός, καίπερ ἔχων τὸν νόμον βοηθόν, ἐπεικῆς ἐστι. 1138, a 1.

The difficulties mentioned by Aristotle as to the relation between law and equity do not strike a modern, and especially an English, reader to whom the distinction between legal and equitable principles is perfectly familiar, and who is accustomed to consider those principles, although differing in many respects, both equally just. But we have only to turn to the Sokratic discourses to see how natural and real the doubts cleared up in this chapter were to the majority even of educated men in the fourth century. It seemed a difficulty that law and equity, which were recognised as unlike in many of their practical applications, should both be called, as in fact they were, by the common name "just"; for it was argued, if they are different they ought not to have the common name, and if they have the common name they cannot be different. This objection, serious only when taken by a Platonist, depended on the belief that things denoted by a common name are so denoted because they participate in a common substance which, together with its properties, was believed to form a part of everything to which the common name was given. On that view law and equity could not both be called just, because they did not share in all the properties of the thing called justice. Aristotle meets the difficulty by a theory of predication which a Platonist adversary would reject, but which his own followers accepted. He points out that the relation of law and equity to justice is that of two species falling under one genus, and that the generic term "just" is properly predicable of both; "they are not exactly the same, nor do they appear to be generically different when you look at them."¹¹⁹

¹¹⁹ οὔτε γὰρ ὡς ταὐτὸν ἀπλῶς οὔθ' ὡς ἕτερον τῇ γένει φαίνεται σκοπούμενοις. 1137, a 33.

The sense in which equity is called just is explained and expressed by Aristotle in language which can hardly be improved upon. Equity is just because it remedies the inequalities which often arise from the application of general rules to unforeseen cases. *Habet aliquid ex iniquo omne magnum exemplum.* Equity does that which the law maker would do were it possible for him to make orders *ex tempore* to fit each particular combination of circumstances. It does that which an order in an action often does and always tries to do where there are numerous parties and complicated interests—it applies the leaden rule. This view, which looks so simple and reasonable, is in fact difficult to put into practice without results which rob it of much of its theoretic excellence. For either the application of equitable principles is governed by rules or not; if it is not, justice is deprived of one of its most valuable attributes—uniformity; if it is, equity in no short time becomes consolidated into a system nearly as inflexible as law itself; in the one case the leaden rule becomes so soft that it can hardly be used, in the other so rigid that you might as well have taken the iron one to begin with.

CHAPTER 11.—In the ninth chapter the question “Can a man act unjustly to himself?” was asked, but not answered. The answer is given in this chapter. We may inquire why the discussion on equity is thrust in between the question and its answer, but we cannot with any certainty say more than that a lecturer is not always logical in his order of treatment.

“There are two senses in which a man may be said to act unjustly; when he violates current conceptions of what is right expressed either in terms of positive law or in the unwritten rules of custom—unjust in the general

sense of the term,¹²⁰ or when he acts contrary to some specific rule,—unjust in the limited sense.¹²¹ In neither case,” says Aristotle, “can a man be unjust to himself. The opponents of this view take the case of suicide and argue as follows: the law does not expressly direct a man to kill himself; what law in such cases does not direct, it forbids, it therefore forbids suicide and the man who kills himself acts unjustly; he violates rules of conduct which both law and public opinion forbid.”¹²² Yes, replies Aristotle, “but to whom is he unjust? Not to himself, for he acted voluntarily, but to the state, and the proof is that the state treats him as a wrong-doer, and public opinion condemns him too.”¹²³

“If we limit injustice to the specific sense of the term, it is clear from the very definition given of regulative justice that a man cannot be unjust to himself, for this would require the same thing to be added to and subtracted from the same person, whereas the conception of justice and injustice always involves more persons than

¹²⁰ τὰ μὲν γάρ ἐστι τῶν δικαίων τὰ κατὰ πᾶσαν ἀρετὴν ὑπὸ τοῦ νόμου τεταγμένα. 1138, a 5.

¹²¹ ἔτι καθ' ὃ ἄδικος μόνον ὁ ἀδικῶν καὶ μὴ ὅλως φαῦλος. 1138, a 13.

¹²² ἐκὼν τοῦτο δρᾷ παρὰ τὸν αὐτὸν νόμον, ὃ οὐκ ἔῃ ὁ νόμος ἄδικεῖ ἄρα. 1138, a 10. “Was aber von solchen Dingen das Gesetz nicht gebietet, das verbietet es.” Stahr, p. 194. He adds in a note: “Ich habe hinzugesetzt ‘von solchen Dingen,’ d.h. wie schon Donatus Acciaiolus bemerkt, von solchen Dingen, die augenscheinlich und nach dem Urtheil der einfachen Verrunft Uebel sind.”

¹²³ διὸ καὶ ἡ πόλις ζημιοί, καὶ τις ἀτιμία πρόσεστι τῷ ἑαυτὸν διαφθείραντι ὡς τὴν πόλιν ἀδικοῦντι. 1138, a 12.

one.¹²⁴ Again, an unjust man acts voluntarily and deliberately and he is the first to begin, a man who merely retaliates is within his rights;¹²⁵ if then a man is unjust to himself, he must be at once the aggressor and the aggrieved. Moreover, the supposition implies that a man can voluntarily submit to injustice, which has been shown to be impossible. Add to this that injustice as a general term covers the particular acts called unjust,¹²⁶ but no one burglariously enters his own house or swindles himself;¹²⁷ the arguments used to prove that a man cannot be wronged with his own consent are applicable here. To do injustice and to suffer injustice are both wrongs, but the former is the greater wrong. Although suffering injustice is absolutely less bad than doing injustice, accidentally it may well be the greater evil. A doctor would say that a pleurisy is worse than a stumble, yet the latter might accidentally be worse if through having stumbled a man should be killed."

"Metaphorically, indeed, we may speak of justice—not indeed as between a man and himself but as between a man and certain parts of himself; but even in this sense we cannot use the word justice in its full meaning, but only in the sense in which we speak of justice between master and slave. All these arguments about a man doing himself injustice and suffering injustice

¹²⁴ ἀεὶ ἐν πλείοσιν ἀνάγκη εἶναι τὸ δίκαιον καὶ τὸ ἄδικον. 1138, a 19.

¹²⁵ ὁ γὰρ διότι ἔπαθε καὶ τὸ αὐτὸ ἀντιποιῶν οὐ δοκεῖ ἀδικεῖν. 1138, a 21.

¹²⁶ ἄνευ τῶν κατὰ μέρος ἀδικημάτων οὐδεὶς ἀδικεῖ. 1138, a 24.

¹²⁷ μοιχεύει δ' οὐδεὶς τὴν ἑαυτοῦ οὐδὲ τοιχωρυχεῖ τὸν ἑαυτοῦ τοῖχον οὐδὲ κλέπτει τὰ αὐτοῦ. 1138, a 25.

assume a divided personality—a rational part of himself and an irrational part, each capable of acting and suffering independently. Plato's view of justice in the Republic is founded on this assumption, and if we make it, then injustice by a man to himself becomes possible because it is possible for him to be in a state in which reason and desire conceived as separate agencies are in conflict.¹²⁸ In these two divisions of the soul there may therefore be the same kind of metaphorical justice as exists between ruler and ruled."

The whole of the eleventh chapter is directed against Plato's account of justice in the Republic. It is only by a metaphor or a metonym,¹²⁹ says Aristotle, that we can speak of justice, where the same person is agent and patient, or where we assume "parts of his mind" and conceive them to act and react upon one another as if they were different persons.

¹²⁸ ἐν τούτοις γὰρ τοῖς λόγοις (in the Republic) διέστηκε τὸ λόγον ἔχον μέρος τῆς ψυχῆς πρὸς τὸ ἄλογον· εἰς ἃ δὴ βλέπουσι (the Platonists) καὶ δοκεῖ εἶναι ἀδικία πρὸς αὐτόν, ὅτι ἐν τούτοις ἔστι πάσχειν τι παρὰ τὰς ἑαυτῶν [ἑαυτοῦ F] ὀρέξεις. 1138, b 8. ἐν τούτοις (cf. καὶ τούτοις. 1138, b 12) refers to the immediately preceding division of the soul into the λόγον ἔχον μέρος and the ἄλογον μέρος, and the conflict is between reason and desire. ἑαυτοῦ seems right, as you cannot speak of the ὀρέξεις of the λόγον ἔχων μέρος.

¹²⁹ κατὰ μεταφορὰν δὲ καὶ ὁμοιότητα. 1138, b 5.

REMARKS

ARISTOTLE's book on justice deals with a difficult matter much talked about by inquirers like those who were the companions of Sokrates, much lectured on by professional teachers, and which had formed the subject of an elaborate treatise from the hand of no less an authority than Plato. A plain man wishing to know what the word "justice" meant and to what acts the epithet "just" should be applied would have been greatly embarrassed in attempting to co-ordinate what he had heard from these quarters. He would remember having been told that justice was a kind of wisdom;¹²⁹ that it was something which did good to others and harm to himself;¹³⁰ that it might be described as speaking the truth and restoring what you have received;¹³¹ that it consisted in doing good to his friends and harm to his enemies;¹³² that it meant doing his own proper work and not being a busybody,¹³³ that a man was to be considered just when his reason and the appetitive and spirited parts of his nature each did their duty, and that a state was just when its constituent

¹²⁹ Plato, *Repub.* 351 A.

¹³⁰ Plato, *Repub.* 343 C.

¹³¹ Plato, *Repub.* 331 D.

¹³² Plato, *Repub.* 332 D.

¹³³ Plato, *Def.* 411 D.

classes refrained from encroaching upon one another's functions and privileges. To an inquirer puzzled by these different views Aristotle's account of the matter would be a welcome relief. It was at least intelligible and sufficiently comprehensive. It enabled him clearly to distinguish the general sense of the word "just" as "law abiding" and "conforming to custom" from the more special senses in which a man was said to be "straight," to act "on the square" in business matters, or to be just if, as magistrate or politician, he was called upon to decide between parties, to inflict punishment or to allocate honours or rewards. Aristotle's account of justice is indeed far from being either complete or consistent, but it was a great advance on anything which had been before said on the subject, and those who became acquainted with it for the first time must have felt that they were passing, like the prisoners in Plato's cave, from shadows and gloom into the clear light of day.

Aristotle, generalising the acts called in the Greek language "just" finds them to fall under the two notions of conformity to law and equality. To conform to law is to be a good man and a good citizen; law itself is only a fixed universal custom—

“——vir bonus est quis?

Qui consulta patrum, qui leges juraque servat?”

whereas the habit of dealing equally as between yourself and others is a special form of good conduct, and not good conduct in general. Much confusion has arisen and still arises from not attending to this distinction which Aristotle insists upon and puts clearly in the first chapter of this book.

Equality is the governing characteristic of that special virtue called "justice" which alone forms the subject of Aristotle's inquiry in this book. There are two cases in

which a just or equal man may be called upon to act; he may have to distribute something among those entitled to a share in it, he himself being possibly one of the sharers; or he may be called upon to set things right, to redress a grievance, to remedy an unequal distribution, to punish a crime, or to enforce a contract. In the former case, that of distribution, he will look to the respective merits of the sharers, by whatever standard that merit is determined in the particular case before him—good conduct,¹³⁴ hard work, public services or what not, and he will determine the shares by applying the rule of geometrical proportion, and not otherwise. In the latter case, where justice is remedial, he will produce equality by considering what the person causing the injury or breaking the contract has gained by the transaction, and giving that gain to the sufferer, he will arrive at equality by the rule of arithmetical proportion. This view of justice, which is Aristotle's own contribution to what had been said on the subject, is both ingenious and acute, but it must be admitted that its defects are almost as obvious as its merits.¹³⁵

¹³⁴ Good conduct is considered to be a merit only in aristocratically governed societies; under other constitutions it would appear from Aristotle's language (1131, a 25) that justice does not require it to be counted in ascertaining merit. Plato in the *Laws* makes virtue an essential in ascertaining "the best equality." τὴν δὲ ἀληθεστάτην καὶ ἀρίστην ἰσότητα οὐκέτι ῥᾶδιον παντὶ ἰδεῖν. Διὸς γὰρ δὴ κρίσις ἐστὶ—τῷ μὲν γὰρ μείζονι πλείω, τὸ δὲ ἐλάττωσι σμικρότερα νέμει, μέτρια διδοῦσα πρὸς τὴν αὐτῶν φύσιν ἑκατέρω, καὶ δὴ τιμὰς μείζουσι μὲν πρὸς ἀρετὴν ἀεὶ μείζουσας κτλ. (Plato, *Laws* vi. 757 C D.)

¹³⁵ The idea of making justice depend on geometric proportion is not Aristotle's own. In the *Gorgias*, Plato had spoken of geometric equality (not proportion) as

In the first place there are many cases in which law was habitually invoked which do not fall under any of the heads to which Aristotle reduces all instances calling for the application of a legally just rule. Examples of such cases are, indictments for impiety (Sokrates' case); indictments for proposing an improper and unconstitutional law (Timocrates' case); actions of ejectment; actions to recover damage for diverting streams of water; actions for failing to support houses, land, or mines whereby the complainant is injured; actions of trespass to try the title of a mortgagee; actions of exchange;—all cases of which examples are to be found in Demosthenes. But supposing that Aristotle's division was not intended to be exhaustive and without criticising it on that account, there is the further objection that the rules he gives for arriving at equality are inapplicable to the cases which are expressly stated to fall within them, Aristotle's rule for ascertaining the measure of damages in a civil action, namely that you look to the difference occasioned by the injury and redress it by taking from the wrong-doer what he has gained and giving it as compensation to the injured person, would lead to consequences so absurd that we may be sure that it was not acted on. Athens was a great commercial and financial centre—the London of the Greek world—and she had a very large foreign trade. The cases which came before her Courts (there was a special court with special jurors for the rapid trial of commercial cases) were nearly as complicated and technical as those which

powerful with Gods and men (*ἡ ἰσότης ἡ γεωμετρικὴ καὶ ἐν θεοῖς καὶ ἐν ἀνθρώποις δύναται*. Plato, Gorgias, 508 A). But he nowhere refers to arithmetic proportion, nor does he mention the rule by which geometric equality is applicable to justice.

engage our own tribunals; business would have been speedily brought to a standstill if they had not had some better way of adjusting differences than by applying the rule of arithmetical proportion. Then, it is hard to see why the law should look to gain and loss in the case of regulative justice and should exclude the consideration of those elements from the case of distributive justice. When something is taken out of a common fund and given to one of several to whom that fund belongs, the recipient gains by what he receives and every one else loses. If it is proposed to give a successful general a hundred thousand pounds, the Chancellor of the Exchequer ought to have something to say. Here is evidently a case of distributive justice, but it does not fall within the formula of geometrical proportion; you cannot say, "As is the merit of the person to be rewarded to the merit of those out of whose pocket his reward comes, so should be the money he is to receive to their money." The truth of the matter is that Aristotle's classification was framed mainly for the purpose of bringing justice within the rule of the mean. He was partly right and partly wrong; justice is a mean, but just acts are not always in the middle. Subjectively considered, it is a habit of mind which resists the deflecting influences of fear, favour, or self-interest in our relation to others, and hence may be said to aim at a middle course; but the path of justice, like the path of safety, is not always in the centre of the channel; ¹³⁶ we must consider merits it is true, but the merits are sometimes all on one side.

Now this subjective and personal aspect of the case is

¹³⁶ ἀλλὰ μάλα Σκύλλης σκοπέλῳ πεπλημένος ὄκα
 νῆα παρεξέλααν, ἐπεὶ ἡ πολὺν φέρτερόν ἐστιν
 ἕξ ἐτάρους ἐν νηὶ ποθήμεναι ἢ ἅμα πάντα.

Odys. 12. 108.

ignored in Aristotle's rules. The desire for a neat formula which guided him in his attempt to show that justice was a mean state, also caused him to forget the important distinction between equality in relation to things and equality in relation to persons, to which he had called attention when describing the moral mean.¹³⁷

In proving justice to be a mean in the fifth book, he says, "In whatever action there is too much and too little there is also that which is equal"; if he had added, "but we must remember that the mean in conduct is not necessarily a point equidistant from the extremes," we should probably not have heard of arithmetical proportion and the divided line, and many of the practical difficulties in which Aristotle's theory is involved would not have arisen.

There is a farther difficulty. Aristotle's rule requires to be differently applied in different political circumstances. Justice being essentially the social virtue, must take its colour from society. The justice of an oligarchy will not be the justice of an aristocracy; "merit" is differently judged in the two communities, and justice in one of its two great departments is a distribution according to merit.

The application of the just rule is therefore fluctuating and justice itself relative. Yet we are told that one part of political justice is natural and one part conventional, and that the natural part is always and everywhere the same.¹³⁸ If we ask which part is natural we get no answer. It can hardly be the distributive part, for that depends on the variable element of merit; nor can it be the regulative part, for to say that the way in which crime is punished and voluntary transactions are adjusted is

¹³⁷ 1106, a 26.

¹³⁸ Chap. 7. 1134, b 18.

the same all over the world is too obviously to contradict plain facts,—*ἀμφισβητεῖ τοῖς φαινόμενοις ἐναργῶς*. It is no easier to suppose that Aristotle meant to say that justice as the expression of law and custom has everywhere the same force, for nothing differs more than custom.

In the *Gorgias* of Plato (482 C–492 C) there is a long discussion on the contrast between natural and conventional justice, Kalliklês maintaining against Sokrates that the law of nature is the law of the stronger; that the wiser and more capable rightly overpower the weaker and worse,¹³⁹ and that the rules of non-natural or conventional justice were framed by the weak with the object of muzzling the strong. Kalliklês is made to state the theory in an offensive manner and to maintain, contrary to fact, that it necessarily involves giving unrestrained rein to the passions and appetites of mankind.¹⁴⁰ There is, however, little doubt that the law of nature is substantially what Kalliklês contended for, although he was ignorant of its reasons and limitations—namely, that the better and more capable individuals live and thrive at the expense of the worse and more incapable, and that in civilised communities at all events, laws are framed largely in the interests of the weak in order to repress the encroachments of the strong.

Aristotle's observations on currency are highly interesting, and show that he fully understood the functions of money, both as a measure of value and as a medium of exchange.

He points out the impossibility of changing commodi-

¹³⁹ ἄρχειν τὸν βελτίω τῶν χειρόνων καὶ πλεον ἔχειν τὸν ἀμείνω τοῦ φαυλοτέρου. Plato, *Gorgias*, 488 B.

¹⁴⁰ τοῦτο γὰρ οἶμαι ἐγὼ τὸ δίκαιον εἶναι φύσει, τὸ βελτίω ὄντα καὶ φρονιμώτερον καὶ ἄρχειν καὶ πλεον ἔχειν τῶν φαυλοτέρων. Plato, *Gorgias*, 490 A; 491 E.

ties until a common measure has been fixed upon. He is assuming, of course, the case of a complex and full-grown community with many wants and a market for a supply of them. In an early stage of civilisation barter is the mode in which commodities are exchanged, but under a social system of any complexity some common measure of value must be fixed upon. In theory, anything that can be handled and carried about may be selected as this common measure, but in practice some valuable commodity, and especially the precious metals, is so much more convenient as always to be used when this is obtainable in sufficient quantity, and is assumed by Aristotle as the measure of value.

Any community, therefore, possessing a currency, *i.e.*, some one thing that has been agreed upon as that by which commodities may be compared (*νόμισμα*), has in its hands an instrument by which commodities may be exchanged. As Aristotle is careful to point out, exchange implies demand, for if no one wanted anything there could be no exchange, but a person possessing this conventional standard of value has that which can be exchanged against any demand, present or future. The maker of a bed is not obliged to wait until he finds some one who wishes to exchange two pairs of shoes for half a bed; he sells his bed for money, and buys the shoes with half of it. Or if, not being in immediate want of shoes, he has a bed and sells it, he knows that he can buy shoes whenever he happens to want them.¹⁴¹

As Aristotle says, anything may be selected as the measure of value, and if a thing having no intrinsic value should happen to be selected it could be changed

¹⁴¹ ὑπὲρ δὲ τῆς μελλούσης ἀλλαγῆς, εἰ νῦν μηδὲν δέεται, ὅτι ἔσται ἂν δεηθῇ, το νόμισμα οἷον ἐγγυητής ἐστ' ἡμῖν. 1133, b 10.

and made valueless at the will of the community.¹⁴² Not so in the case of the precious metals; the currency may be depreciated, but it can never be made worthless.

Men having fixed on something intrinsically useful, easily dealt with, and possessing exchangeable value available for the purposes of life,¹⁴³ have as their medium of exchange a commodity subject indeed to variation in value like any other, but tending to be uniform.¹⁴⁴ This is true of gold and silver currencies, for both are more valuable in proportion to bulk than any other articles that are procurable in quantities sufficient for use; their level of value does actually tend to be uniform; they are not liable to the extreme fluctuations of price of other commodities, and for this reason are more suitable for the purpose for which money is required. Aristotle's views on currency were those of a sound political economist.

In Athens with its extensive foreign trade, and where most of our methods of carrying on business (with the exception of bills of exchange) were in constant use, there must doubtless have been many who knew and acted on the principles laid down by him, but they would probably have found it difficult to explain why they did so. No other writer until modern, and indeed until comparatively recent times has seen so clearly the essentials of a good monetary system or has expressed them better than Aristotle has done in the fifth chapter of this book.

¹⁴² οὐ φύσει ἀλλὰ νόμῳ ἐστὶ (τὸ νόμισμα) καὶ ἐφ' ἡμῖν μεταβαλεῖν καὶ ποιῆσαι ἄχρηστον. 1133, a 30.

¹⁴³ ὁ τῶν χρησίμων αὐτὸ ὃν εἶχε τὴν χρεῖαν εὐμεταχείριστον πρὸς τὸ ζῆν. Polit. i. 9. 1257, a 36.

¹⁴⁴ πᾶσχει μὲν οὖν καὶ τοῦτο [τὸ νόμισμα] τὸ αὐτό· οὐ γὰρ ἀεὶ ἴσον δύναται, ὅμως δὲ βούλεται εἶναι μᾶλλον. 1133, b 13.

CHAPTER VII

Book VI.

INTELLECT IN RELATION TO CONDUCT

WISDOM AND PRUDENCE

λέγομεν γὰρ αὐτῶν [τῶν ἀρετῶν] τὰς μὲν διανοητικὰς τὰς δὲ ἡθικὰς, σοφίαν μὲν καὶ σύνεσιν καὶ φρόνησιν διανοητικὰς, ἐλευθεριότητα δὲ καὶ σωφροσύνην ἡθικὰς. Eth. 1. 13. 1103, a 4.

IN this book we have to do with intellect under two aspects; on its practical side, in relation to conduct, and on its theoretic side, in relation to the exercise of the highest powers of which we are capable. Man's special work having been ascertained to be a function of mind, and mind having been found to operate under two different conditions, either as implicated with the feelings and desires common to man and other animals or as freed from those conditions, there is a resulting difference in the excellence (*ἀρετή*) of the two special functions of which man is capable; ¹ one of these excellences is one of conduct and the other one of thought. These accordingly are the subjects of the sixth book, and they are dealt with so far, and so far only, as is necessary to fill in the rough sketch of happiness in the first book, and in fulfilment of the half promise there given that a fuller account would afterwards be supplied.²

This inquiry takes us into psychology, a subject which we have already been told legislators must know something about—enough at least to enable them to under-

¹ διορίζεται δὲ καὶ ἡ ἀρετὴ κατὰ τὴν διαφορὰν ταύτην· λέγομεν γὰρ αὐτῶν τὰς μὲν διανοητικὰς τὰς δὲ ἠθικάς, Eth. 1. 13. 1103, a 3.

² περιγεγράφθω μὲν οὖν τὰγαθὸν ταύτη· δεῖ γὰρ ἴσως ὑποτυπῶσαι πρῶτον, εἴθ' ὕστερον ἀναγράψαι. 1. 7. 1098, a 20.

stand the nature of moral conduct,³ but we are not led by Aristotle to expect such a description and analysis as would be proper in a work on psychology, nor do we find any such description. The subject of the book is Wisdom and Prudence; the other "modes by which we arrive at truth" are summarily described in order to distinguish them from these two, but not farther or otherwise, and, as might be expected from the practical scope of the Ethics, especial care is taken to bring out the meaning of prudence and distinguish it from other allied mental processes.⁴

The psychology of the book, as of other parts of the Ethics, is not that of Aristotle's own formal treatise on the subject; which the practical politician might perhaps not have found it easy to understand. He contents himself with what has been said elsewhere, in discourses which he calls "exoteric," and which he considers will be sufficient for the purpose.⁵ What these discourses were we do not know, but they were certainly not the book on Mind. We hear nothing either here or in Book I. of form and matter, or of life and mind

³ Eth. 1. 13. 1102, a 23.

⁴ See Chaps. 9, 10, 11.

⁵ λέγεται δὲ περὶ αὐτῆς (τῆς ψυχῆς) καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἐξωτερικοῖς λόγοις· οἷον τὸ μὲν ἄλογον αὐτῆς εἶναι, τὸ δὲ λόγον ἔχον. 1102, a 26. This is not Plato's own division; he made three parts, not two. Aristotle in the De Anima pointedly attributes it to others, but without saying who they are; perhaps he refers to Xenocrates. ἔχει δὲ ἀπορίαν εὐθὺς πῶς τε δεῖ μόρια λέγειν τῆς ψυχῆς καὶ πόσα. τρόπον γάρ τινα ἄπειρα φαίνεται, καὶ οὐ μόνον ἃ τινες λέγουσι διορίζοντες, λογιστικὸν καὶ συνικτὸν καὶ ἐπιθυμητικόν, οἷ δὲ τὸ λόγον ἔχον καὶ τὸ ἄλογον. De Anima iii. 9, 432, a 26.

being an entelechy; we start, not with any account of the nature of rational life but with a description of its divisions—a point of view inconsistent with Aristotle's own theory, in which its divisions were not admitted.

The psychology of the *Ethics* is based on the view favoured by the Academy, but not directly referable to Plato, that the vital principle is divided into two parts, rational and irrational, and on the subdivision of the rational part into states and conditions (*παθήματα*) corresponding to the four different grades of certainty in our knowledge, namely, reason, understanding, belief and conjecture. This is the view which, as we are told in the passage just cited, was adopted in the exoteric discourses. It is therefore not improbable that the discourses to which Aristotle refers were lectures in which the theory of two vital principles and the division of the rational principle into four parts were described and we may be sure criticised. However this may be, it appears that Aristotle considered it enough for merely ethical purposes to assume a twofold division of mind corresponding to the nature of the subject matter with which it comes into contact, and to the degree of certainty resulting therefrom.

Although not strictly necessary for the understanding of the *Ethics*, it is yet interesting to know something of Aristotle's own views of the nature and functions of life; for of the manifold subjects which he has treated there is no one in which his originality and great intellectual and scientific eminence are more shown. A certain principle called life (*Psychê*) is in his view the efficient but not the material cause of the various activities put forth by organised bodies. The processes of growth, nutrition, reproduction, sensation, phantasy and reason are all due to the union of this principle with the body, in which union life is the active, formative agent and body the passive and material recipient. Body

and life are related as matter and form are related in the objects we see around us; neither part can exist or be conceived without the other; form without matter, or matter without form, are expressions which we cannot realise in thought. It is therefore incorrect to say as Plato said, that there are three kinds of life. Life is the realisation of the various potentialities of matter; the compound varies as the elements vary, but there is but one life or formative element throughout nature and by it matter is called into functional activity in various ways, or as we may express it, has various manifestations.

The simplest and at the same time the most general way in which this active principle manifests itself is in the phenomena of nutrition and growth, in which form it is common to all living beings. The distinction between animate and inanimate bodies is the distinction of having or not having the power of nutrition and growth. This power, called by Aristotle the vegetal soul or principle, is distinctive of all plants;⁶ they have it but they have nothing else; it is the simplest form of life. A fuller and more complex manifestation of the vital principle is found in those bodies which, possessing the power of nutrition and growth, including that of reproduction, add to it the simplest of all the senses, the sense of touch. Touch is peculiar to animals and is the difference which parts them off from the vegetal world.⁷ The lowest and simplest animals have

⁶ *ὑπάρχει δὲ τοῖς μὲν φυτοῖς τὸ θρεπτικὸν μόνον.* De Anima ii. 3. 414, a 33. Physiologists at the present day consider that there is evidence that plants possess definite sense-organs.

⁷ *τὸ μὲν γὰρ ζῷον αἰσθήσει ὥριται.* De Part. Animal. iii. 4. 666, a 34. This statement would not now be

the sense of touch only, but the higher members of the class gradually add other senses to this until the full and, as Aristotle believed, the final number of five senses was reached. But man alone of all living things possesses, in addition to the functions of life common to him with plants and animals, the special manifestation of psychical energy known as reason.

But reason (or to use the expression which Aristotle adopts in the *Ethics*, the divisions of rational life) takes two distinctive forms, each special to man and characteristic of him as compared with other animals; the faculty by which contingent matter is apprehended and reasoned upon—called by Aristotle practical intellect, and the faculty by which necessary matter is apprehended and reasoned upon, theorising mind or speculative intellect. The soul therefore, although indivisible, and indeed incapable of being conceived as divided, may yet in its operation, in the manifestation of its activity in conjunction with various forms of matter, be regarded from four points of view:—

1. The life of growth, nutrition and reproduction ;
2. The life of sensation, involving as a consequence that of appetite and desire ;
3. The life of practical intelligence ; and
4. The life of pure reason.

Looking at these four manifestations of psychical energy from the point of view of ethical inquiry, the first is put aside altogether, as in Aristotle's opinion contributing nothing to conduct.⁸ Excluding purely

acquiesced in ; plants, or at least some plants, seem to have the sense of touch. On all subjects the advance of knowledge tends to modify sharp distinctions.

⁸ καὶ τὸ μὲν θρεπτικὸν ἐατέον, ἐπειδὴ τῆς ἀνθρωπικῆς ἀρετῆς ἀμοιβὴν πέφυκεν. *Eth.* 1. 13. 1102, b 11.

physical life, there remain the sensory life, the life of practical intelligence and that of pure reason.

The combination of sensory life with that of practical intelligence gives rise to moral conduct, and when rightly combined, to so much happiness as man, regarded as a being compounded of appetites, passions, and practical reason, is capable of.⁹ Sensory life when combined with speculative reason gives us happiness in its unadulterated and highest form, unmixed with baser matter, and according to Aristotle's view of what constitutes supremacy, supreme.¹⁰ For the end or final cause of anything, identified by him with its happiness, is ascertained by considering not only what is the special excellence of that thing, but that which is the highest of its various special excellences.¹¹

In the case of man his highest special excellence is the intellectual faculty by which he ascertains truth in the field of necessary matter—in other words, wisdom (*σοφία*) which accordingly forms one of the two subjects with which this book is concerned. But the lower faculty, brought into play in contingent matter and in practical life (*φρόνησις*), is also special to man and, in an ethical treatise, at least more important even than wisdom, since it does what wisdom does not do, determines the true

⁹ συνηρτημέναι δ' αὐται [αἱ τοῦ ἡθους ἀρεταί] καὶ τοῖς πάθεσιν περὶ τὸ σύνθετον ἂν εἴεν· αἱ δὲ τοῦ συνθέτου ἀρεταὶ ἀνθρωπικαί· καὶ ὁ βίος δὴ ὁ κατὰ ταύτας καὶ ἡ εὐδαιμονία. Eth. 10. 8. 1178, a 19.

¹⁰ τὸ γὰρ οἰκεῖον ἐκάστω τῇ φύσει κράτιστον καὶ ἡδιστόν ἐστιν ἐκάστω· καὶ τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ δὴ ὁ κατὰ τὸν νοῦν βίος, εἴπερ τοῦτο μάλιστα ἀνθρώπος. οὗτος ἄρα καὶ εὐδαιμονέστατος. Eth. 10. 7. 1178, a 5.

¹¹ εἰ δὲ πλείους αἱ ἀρεταί, κατὰ τὴν ἀριστήν καὶ τελειοτάτην. Eth. 1. 7. 1098, a 17.

point of action, always, as the review of the virtues of conduct has shown us, a matter of difficulty and doubt. Prudence as the faculty in question is accordingly the remaining and indeed the chief subject of interest and discussion in the sixth book.¹²

The account which is given in Chapters 4, 5 and 6 of this book of the other three "modes by which

¹² Hinsichtlich der Zahl der dianoëtischen Tugenden stimme ich in der Hauptsache Prantl bei (über die dianoëtischen Tugenden, München, 52). Wer vorsichtig urtheilen will, wird anzuerkennen haben, dass im sechsten Buche nur die σοφία und die φρόνησις wirklich mit diesem Namen belegt werden und das Anfang und Schluss der Untersuchung es wahrscheinlich machen, dass der Verfasser des Buchs nur diese beiden als Tugenden des ἐπιστημονικόν und λογιστικόν angesehen wissen wollte. Cap. 2. 1139, a 15 heisst es: ληπτέον ἄρ' ἐκατέρου τούτων τίς ἡ βελτίστη ἔξις· αὕτη γὰρ ἀρετὴ ἐκατέρου und am Ende des Capitels: ἀμφοτέρων δὲ τῶν νοητικῶν μορίων ἀλήθεια τὸ ἔργον. καθ' ἃς οὖν μάλιστα ἔξεις ἀληθεύσει ἐκάτερον, αὗται ἀρεταὶ ἀμφοῖν. Betont man, wie es nothig ist, das μάλιστα und die βελτίστη ἔξις, so ist die Vermuthung nicht abzuweisen, dass im Folgenden nur zwei dianoëtische Tugenden aufgestellt werden sollen. Und dieser Vermuthung wird durch die Recapitulation Cap. 12. p. 1143, b 14, bestätigt: τί μὲν οὖν ἐστὶν ἡ φρόνησις καὶ ἡ σοφία, καὶ περὶ τίνα ἐκάτερα τυγχάνει οὔσα, καὶ ὅτι ἄλλου τῆς ψυχῆς μορίου ἀρετὴ ἐκάτερα, εἴρηται. Auf andere Stellen des sechsten Buches, aus denen dasselbe gefolgert werden kann, lege ich nicht Gewicht, weil mir ihre Authenticität zweifelhaft ist, aber die angeführten sind auch vollkommen ausreichend, um die gewöhnlicher Ansicht als unhaltbar erscheinen zu lassen." Rassow, Forschungen über die Nicomachische Ethik, p. 124 (note).

the mind arrives at truth in the way of affirmation and negation" (art, science, intuition) is merely ancillary to this main purpose, and is undertaken in order to limit the spheres of wisdom and prudence with more precision. On this some remarks will be found at the end of the book. It is only necessary to add in this place that the faculty called intuition (*Noûs*) is used in the second chapter to describe the faculty by which individual objects of sense are perceived, and in the sixth chapter to designate the faculty by which the ultimate data of science are apprehended. Its use in other places has to be determined by the context, but if these two senses are kept in mind there is usually little difficulty in doing this.

The fifth, sixth and seventh books are suspected by some critics. Without going into the reasons for their doubts, on whose validity equally competent authorities pronounce differently, a general remark may be made. It is not unusual for the same writer to question the authenticity of the books and to quote them as evidence of Aristotle's teaching — Rassow in the passage just quoted avoids this error—but if there is sufficient doubt about their genuineness to warrant their being referred to some unnamed and unknown author, they should not be relied on as evidence either for or against Aristotle; if they are relied on as evidence they should not be doubted. It is not fair to discredit your own witness.

TEXT

CHAPTER 1.—“Moral virtue has already been defined. It is a habit which leads us to a certain course of action which can seldom be exactly fixed, but of which it may be said that it lies between the opposite extremes of too much and too little. It is the function of reason to fix the true point of view, or, to speak precisely, it is the reason of the man of prudence or practical intelligence which has to fix it. But the true point of view determining action, although a mean, is not an absolute or objective mean which can be ascertained by rule and measure; it is relative and subjective, now on one side of the true middle and now on the other, according to the nature of the action, the particular circumstances of the case and idiosyncrasies of the agent.¹³ Still, there are limits to this variation if, as the fact is, the mean in action has to be determined by the rule of reason.”¹⁴

¹³ τοῦ πράγματος μέσον—πρὸς ἡμᾶς μέσον. 1106, a 29.

¹⁴ τις ἔστιν ὁρος τῶν μεσοτήτων ἃς μεταξύ φάμεν εἶναι τῆς ὑπερβολῆς καὶ τῆς ἐλλείψεως, ὅσας κατὰ τὸν ὁρθὸν λόγον. 1138, b 23. The word ὁρος has hitherto not occurred in the Nicomachæan Ethics, although it is found in the Eudemian. This is used as an argument against the Aristotelian authorship of Book VI. But ὁρος is common

"Just, therefore, as an archer aiming at a mark has to calculate his distance, to allow for the wind and adjust his strength accordingly, so the intelligent man of action endeavouring to arrive at the mean must make allowances for tendencies which may carry him in one direction or the other, and moderate or increase his efforts accordingly."¹⁵

in Aristotle, and we find ὁ τῆς ὑπερβολῆς ὄρος in the *Politics*, 7. 12. 1326, b 12.

¹⁵ ἔστι τις σκοπὸς πρὸς ὃν ἀποβλέπων ὁ τὸν λόγον ἔχων ἐπιτείνει καὶ ἀνίησιν. 1138, b 22. ἐπιτείνειν—ἀνίησιν—the regular expressions for tightening and relaxing any strings or cords, here applied by a common metaphor to human action. Plato uses the words of the tendons by which the limbs of the body are moved; σύγκειται μοι τὸ σῶμα ἐξ ὀστέων καὶ νεύρων, καὶ τὰ μὲν ὀστᾶ ἔστι στερεὰ καὶ διαφνᾶς ἔχει χωρὶς ἀπ' ἀλλήλων, τὰ δὲ νεῦρα οἷα ἐπιτείνεσθαι καὶ ἀνίεσθαι, περιамπέχοντα τὰ ὀστᾶ μετὰ τῶν σαρκῶν καὶ δέρματος κτλ. *Phædon* 98 C D. Aristotle explains animal motion in the same way; the bones correspond to the iron or wooden framework of a machine, the tendons to the ropes by the stretching or relaxation of which the animal is moved. *De Motu Animal.* 7. 705, b 7. If it be thought necessary to explain the use of the metaphor here, it probably means that as an archer draws the string of his bow with more or less force according to the distance of the object he aims at, so the judicious man exerts himself more or less according to circumstances in order to arrive at his object. We call a man "slack" or "intense" when he is wanting in bodily or mental energy or the reverse. Aristotle has already used the metaphor of the mark at which an archer aims to indicate the true end of conduct: καθάπερ τοξόται σκοπὸν ἔχοντες μᾶλλον ἢ τυγχάνομεν τοῦ δέοντος (1194, a 23), and Plato in the

"All this is true enough, but it is not definite enough. In every pursuit it is true to say that you must be neither too strenuous nor too slack, but if you only know as much as this, you have no useful rule of action. In a case of illness you want to know the exact treatment to be applied, and it is not to the purpose to tell you to do what a careful doctor would do. We must therefore try to describe exactly what is the kind of intelligence called into play in moral conduct, and how it is to be defined.¹⁶ This leads us to an examination of mind and its functions.

"The vital principle (*Psychê*) consists of two parts, one rational, the other irrational. The rational part is again subdivided, according as it operates upon those objects whose data are changeless and consequently necessary, or upon contingent matter. There must be a clear separation between these two parts of the rational soul because their objects are different, if indeed it be true that it is by virtue of a similarity between the apprehending faculty and its object that cognition takes place.¹⁷

Gorgias used the same metaphor: οὗτος ἔμοιγε δοκεῖ ὁ σκοπὸς εἶναι, πρὸς ὃν βλέποντα δεῖ ζῆν, καὶ πάντα εἰς τοῦτο τὰ αὐτοῦ συντείνοντα καὶ τὰ τῆς πόλεως, κτλ. (Gorgias 507 D).

¹⁶ διὸ δεῖ καὶ περὶ τὰς τῆς ψυχῆς ἕξεις μὴ μόνον ἀληθῶς εἶναι τοῦτ' εἰρημένον, ἀλλὰ καὶ διορισμένον τίς ἐστὶν ὁ ὀρθὸς λόγος καὶ τοῦτου τις ὅρος. 1138, b 32.

¹⁷ πρὸς γὰρ τὰ τῷ γένει ἕτερα καὶ τῶν τῆς ψυχῆς μορίων ἕτερον τῷ γένει τὸ πρὸς ἐκάτερον πεφυκός, εἶπερ καθ' ὁμοιότητά τινα καὶ οἰκειότητα ἢ γνῶσις ὑπάρχει αὐτοῖς. 1139, a 8. Aristotle puts it in this cautious way because he has elsewhere (*De Anima* ii. 5. 416. 635) pointed out the difficulties which the view that like is perceived by like involves. He evades those difficulties, as he evades so many others, by distinguishing Potentiality (*δύναμις*) and

"Now, let one of these divisions of the rational soul be called scientific and the other calculative or deliberative. For the purpose of our inquiry we ought to select the best habit of each, for the value of each is measured by its best, and the value of that best can only be ascertained by a reference to the work which it properly has to do.¹⁸

CHAPTER 2.—"There are three functions of mind which determine conduct and speculative truth—sensation, reason and desire.¹⁹ We may put sensation out of the question, for it is not a principle of moral action and therefore does

Realisation (ἐντελεχεία). τὸ δ' αἰσθητικὸν δυνάμει ἐστὶν οἶον τὸ αἰσθητὸν ἤδη ἐντελεχεία—πάσχει μὲν οὖν οὐκ ὁμοιον ὅν, πεπονθὸς δ' ὁμοίωται καὶ ἐστὶν οἶον ἐκεῖνο. 418, a 3.

¹⁸ ληπτέον ἄρ' ἐκατέρου τούτων τις ἢ βελτίστη ἔξις· αὕτη γὰρ ἀρετὴ ἐκατεροῦ, ἢ δ' ἀρετὴ πρὸς τὸ ἔργον τὸ οἰκεῖον. 1139, a 15.

¹⁹ τρία δὲ ἐστὶν ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ τὰ κύρια πράξεως καὶ ἀληθείας, αἰσθησις νοῦς ὄρεξις. 1139, a 17. νοῦς is here mind in one of its forms (intuition), not νοῦς as defined in Chapter 6. Intuition is divided by Aristotle into the faculty by which we apprehend the facts of contingent matter, "practical intelligence" (πρακτικὸς νοῦς), and that by which we apprehend the data of necessary matter "theoretic intelligence" (θεωρητικὸς νοῦς). The combination of practical intelligence with desire gives rise to conduct; the combination of theoretic intelligence with dialectic reasoning leads to speculative truth; the former is the substratum of prudence, the latter of wisdom—the two intellectual faculties to whose explanation and definition this book is devoted. Both these faculties are here described by the common designation νοῦς.

not concern us. Confining ourselves to the other two, it may be stated that reason in the region of affirmation and negation corresponds to pursuit and avoidance in the region of desire. Good conduct is the result of choice, and choice is a compound of deliberation and desire; if our choice is to be good, each of the elements composing it must be good; the reasoning process must be correctly performed and the desires must be directed to right ends: this is the process by which truth in practice is reached.²⁰

"The rational part of this process is calculative or deliberative; the function of mind employed is practical intelligence,²¹ whose sphere is contingent matter and which attains its measure of truth when acting in correspondence with healthy impulses; theorising intelligence on the other hand, which is the distinctive and highest excellence of the other part of the rational soul, has for its end and object the attainment of truth *per se*.

"Mind alone cannot cause any movement, practical intelligence can, because it acts together with desire; it is the cause both of conduct and art!²² Every artist works for some end; his product is not his absolute end, for he generally produces with an ulterior object, but in conduct the act itself is the end and desire is directed to this end. Moral choice is therefore the result of practical intelligence

²⁰ αὕτη μὲν οὖν ἡ διάνοια καὶ ἡ ἀλήθεια πρακτική. τῆς δὲ θεωρητικῆς διανοίας καὶ μὴ πρακτικῆς μηδὲ ποιητικῆς τὸ εὖ καὶ κακῶς τἀληθές ἐστι καὶ ψεῦδος—τοῦ δὲ πρακτικοῦ καὶ διανοητικοῦ ἀλήθεια ὁμολόγως ἔχουσα τῇ ὀρεξει τῇ ὀρθῇ. 1139, a 26.

²¹ Called elsewhere νοῦς ὁ ἕνεκά του λογιζόμενος καὶ ὁ πρακτικός. De Anima iii. 10. 433, a 14, and see 1139, b 4.

²² διάνοια δ' αὕτη οὐθὲν κινεῖ, ἀλλ' ἡ ἕνεκά του καὶ πρακτική· αὕτη δὲ καὶ τῆς ποιητικῆς ἄρχει. 1139, a 35.

stimulated by desire, or (to put it the other way) of desire regulated by practical intelligence, and such a principle of action is man.”²³

CHAPTER 3.—“Let us resume and repeat this matter from a more general point of view. There are five modes by which the mind arrives at truth in the way of affirmation and negation: art, science, prudence, wisdom and intuition; for assumption and opinion are sometimes false. To take science first: we all adopt the view that the conclusions of science must be necessary; as to contingent matter, when it does not fall within the field of direct observation, we cannot be sure whether it exists or not.²⁴ The object of science being necessary is consequently eternal; it is moreover teachable, being a conclusion from antecedent knowledge, as was pointed out in the Analytics. Such previous knowledge is gained either by induction or by deduction; induction supplies a starting point even for universal propositions, and

²³ διὸ ἡ ὁρεκτικὸς νοῦς ἢ προαίρεσις ἡ ὄρεξις διανοητική, καὶ ἡ τοιαύτη ἀρχὴ ἄνθρωπος. 1139, b 4. ἀρχή here means efficient cause (ἀρχή τῆς κινήσεως), the impulse which causes a living being to move, and by moving to act. See De Motu Animal. 6. 700, b 17. ὁρῶμεν δὲ τὰ κινουῦντα τὸ ζῶον διάνοιαν καὶ φαντασίαν καὶ προαίρεσιν καὶ βούλησιν καὶ ἐπιθυμίαν. ταῦτα δὲ πάντα ἀνάγεται εἰς νοῦν καὶ ὄρεξιν—and line 23, ἡ δὲ προαίρεσις κοινὸν διανοίας καὶ ὄρεξεως· ὥστε κινεῖ πρῶτον τὸ ὁρεκτὸν καὶ τὸ διανοητόν. οὐ πᾶν δὲ τὸ διανοητόν, ἀλλὰ τὸ τῶν πρακτῶν τέλος.

²⁴ τὰ δ' ἐνδεχόμενα ἄλλως, ὅταν ἔξω τοῦ θεωρεῖν γένηται, λαμβάνει εἰ ἔστιν ἢ μή. 1139, b 21. In matters of sense, what we don't perceive we don't know. For θεωρεῖν = sensible perception, see 1169, b 33.

deductive inference is a process of reasoning from such propositions.²⁵

"There are, therefore, principles from which deductive inference proceeds which are not the result of any deductive inference, and which must therefore be gained by induction. Science, to put it shortly, is a habit of demonstration from such principles; what has to be added to this definition will be found in the *Analytics*."²⁶

CHAPTER 4.—"To turn to contingent matter; both things made and things done fall within it, but making and doing are different, so that a rational habit of conduct will be different from a rational habit of making. We may call art "a habit of making things on rational principles."²⁷

"Every art has to do with production, and the exercise of art consists in studying how something which may either be or not be can be made to come into existence—the "something" referred to must be of course one of those things whose principle of motion is not in themselves but in their maker."²⁸

"Chance and art apply to the same subjects, and are to a certain extent, as Agathon says, friends."

²⁵ ἡ μὲν γὰρ ἐπαγωγὴ ἀρχὴ ἐστὶ καὶ τοῦ καθόλου, ὁ δὲ συλλογισμὸς ἐκ τῶν καθόλου. 1139, b 28.

²⁶ ἡ μὲν ἄρα ἐπιστήμη ἐστὶν ἕξις ἀποδεικτικὴ καὶ ὅσα ἄλλα προσδιορίζομεθα ἐν τοῖς ἀναλυτικοῖς. 1139, b 31.

²⁷ ταῦτόν ἂν εἴη τέχνη καὶ ἕξις μετὰ λόγου ἀληθοῦς ποιητική. 1140, a 9.

²⁸ ἐστὶ δὲ τέχνη πᾶσα περὶ γένεσιν καὶ τὸ τεχνάζειν θεωρεῖν ὅπως ἂν γένηται τι τῶν ἐνδεχομένων καὶ εἶναι καὶ μὴ εἶναι, καὶ ὧν ἡ ἀρχὴ ἐν τῷ ποιοῦντι ἀλλὰ μὴ ἐν τῷ ποιουμένῳ. 1140, a 10.

CHAPTER 5.—“ We now come to prudence, and we must first consider who are the men who are called prudent. It is an attribute of such men to deliberate well as to what is good and expedient for them in reference to their general happiness in life,²⁹ not to their health only or their strength or to the other things which contribute to happiness, but to each and all of them. People are called prudent when they act rationally with regard to an end not falling within the scope of art. To speak in general terms, a deliberating man is prudent,³⁰ and prudence is neither a science nor an art; it is not a science, for its object is contingent, and the object of science is necessary, and it is not an art, because conduct and production are generically distinct.³¹ It must therefore be a correct habit of rational action directed to human good and evil. The end of production is external to the act of production, but good conduct is its own end.

“ Statesmen like Perikles are thought prudent because they are able to consider what is good for themselves and others; politicians and economists are thought to be prudent for the same reason. Self-restraint is so called because it ‘ keeps a man prudent ’—it certainly preserves the attitude of mind we are considering; not every way of looking at things is perverted by pleasure and pain; pleasure and pain do not interfere with our apprehension of geometrical truths, but only with our conceptions of conduct.³² The reason is that it is the end of conduct

²⁹ πρὸς τὸ εὖ ζῆν ὁλως. 1140, a 28.

³⁰ ὥστε καὶ ὁλως ἂν εἴη φρόνιμος ὁ βουλευτικός. 1140, a 30.

³¹ οὐκ ἂν εἴη ἐπιστήμη μὲν ὅτι ἐνδέχεται τὸ πρακτὸν ἄλλως ἔχειν, τέχνη δ’ ὅτι ἄλλο τὸ γένος πράξεως καὶ ποιήσεως. 1140, b 1.

³² οὐ γὰρ ἅπασαν ὑπόληψιν διαφθείρει οὐδὲ διαστρέφει τὸ

that determines the principles of conduct, and if a man is warped by pleasure and pain he can neither apprehend the determining principles nor see the true end; vice destroys his principles." 33

It results from this that prudence must be defined as "a true habit of conduct guided by reason and directed to what is good for man." 34

"Observe also that there is good art and bad art, but there is no such thing as good prudence and bad prudence. In art the man who makes a mistake on purpose is better than a man who makes one because he cannot help it, but this can scarcely be said of prudence or of any other virtue of conduct." 35

Of the two divisions of rational life, prudence is the highest function of the lower or deliberative division; it is a habit and therefore superior to opinion which also belongs to the same division; you may forget an opinion, but it is not possible to forget a habit.

CHAPTER 6.—"Since science is a conception of universals and of necessary matter and must start from principles of scientific demonstration, neither art, nor prudence, nor science itself can apprehend these principles; art and prudence cannot do so because the matter of science is something capable of scientific demonstration, whereas

ἡδὺ καὶ λυπηρόν, οἷον ὅτι τὸ τρίγωνον δύο ὀρθὰς ἔχει, ἀλλὰ τὰς περὶ τὸ πρακτόν. 1140, b 13.

33 τῷ δὲ διεφθαρμένῳ δι' ἡδονὴν ἢ λύπην εὐθὺς οὐ φαίνεται ἀρχή, οὐδὲ δεῖν τούτου ἕνεκεν οὐδὲ διὰ τοῦθ' αἰρεῖσθαι πάντα καὶ πράττειν—ἔστι γὰρ ἡ κακία φθαρτικὴ ἀρχῆς. 1140, b 17.

34 ἀνάγκη τὴν φρόνησιν ἔξιν εἶναι μετὰ λόγου ἀληθὴ περὶ τὰ ἀνθρώπινα ἀγαθὰ πρακτικόν. 1140, b 20.

35 καὶ ἐν μὲν τέχνῃ ὁ ἐκὼν ἁμαρτάνων αἰρετώτερος, περὶ δὲ φρόνησιν ἥττον, ὥσπερ καὶ περὶ τὰς ἀρετάς. 1140, b 22.

they work in the sphere of contingency;³⁶ science itself is excluded by the fact that it assumes, and therefore cannot either apprehend nor prove, its own principles. Nor can even wisdom do so, for there are cases in which wisdom has to use the methods of science. But since principles must be apprehended by some faculty or other, if neither prudence, science nor wisdom can apprehend them, it follows that they must be apprehended by the only remaining function of the rational mind, namely by intuition.³⁷

Demonstrative science, with which Aristotle is here dealing, takes the form of syllogism and deduces its conclusions from propositions which are true, immediate (that is not resulting from any previous demonstration) and of higher evidentiary value than the conclusions which result from them. These indemonstrable propositions are called by Aristotle Axioms.³⁸ Axioms, of which the proposition that a thing cannot be and not be at the same time, may serve as an example, are indispensable to the acquisition of knowledge of any kind whatever; hypotheses and definitions are only indispensable to knowledge of a particular kind, such as geometry or arithmetic. Axioms require for their apprehension an appropriate faculty, which, for want of a better

³⁶ τὸ μὲν γὰρ ἐπιστητὸν ἀποδεικτόν, αἱ δὲ τυγχάνουσιν οὔσαι περὶ τὰ ἐνδεχόμενα ἄλλως ἔχειν. 1140, b 35.

³⁷ λείπεται νοῦν εἶναι τῶν ἀρχῶν. 1141, a 7.

³⁸ ἀμέσου δ' ἀρχῆς συλλογιστικῆς θέσιν μὲν λέγω ἣν μὴ ἔστι δεῖξαι, μὴ δ' ἀνάγκη ἔχειν τὸν μαθησόμενόν τι· ἣν δ' ἀνάγκη ἔχειν τὸν ὁτιοῦν μαθησόμενον, ἀξίωμα. Anal. Post. i. 2. 72, a 14.

term, may be called intuition (Noûs). Wisdom (σοφία), inasmuch as it sometimes uses demonstrative science, is dependent, like science itself, on intuition.³⁹

In the seventh chapter Aristotle deals with wisdom, the highest of the five modes by which truth is arrived at. An introduction to this chapter is furnished by the following passage from the opening of the *Metaphysics*. "We have described," says Aristotle, "in the *Ethics* the difference between art and science and other faculties of the same kind (prudence, intuition, wisdom). We refer to the matter now because every one assumes what is called wisdom to be occupied with first causes and principles, so that an animal with experience is wiser than animals of any kind whatever who merely rely on the presentations of sense and memory, and an artist is wiser than an empiric, and the master workman than the labourer, and the theoretic than the productive sciences. Wisdom is, then, a science concerned with certain causes and principles."⁴⁰

CHAPTER 7.—"Wisdom is exact and comprehensive knowledge. We only really know a thing when we know both its cause and that the cause assigned *must* be the cause."⁴¹ This is the strict meaning of the word. But in ordinary language wisdom is not confined to scientific generalisations, it deals with conduct and even with art as well. When we talk of wisdom in art we imply the perfection of art, the highest degree of

³⁹ τοῦ γὰρ σοφοῦ περὶ ἐνίων ἔχειν ἀποδειξίν ἐστιν. 1141, a 2. εἴη ἂν ἡ σοφία νοῦς καὶ ἐπιστήμη. 1141, a 18.

⁴⁰ *Met.* i. 1. 981, b 25.

⁴¹ ὅταν τὴν τ' αἰτίαν οἰώμεθα γινώσκειν δι' ἣν τὸ πρᾶγμα ἐστίν, ὅτι ἐκείνου αἰτία ἐστί, καὶ μὴ ἐνδέχασθαι τοῦτ' ἄλλως ἔχειν. *Anal. Post.* i. 2. 71, b 10.

accuracy and finish resulting from the union of manual dexterity and scientific knowledge.⁴²

The wise man must know the reasons of things, but he must also be able to draw inferences. If he is to know the reason in the full sense of knowing, he will require the faculty described in the last chapter called intuition; if he is to infer correctly, he must be acquainted with the methods of science. The subjects which should occupy him should be those which are most worthy to exercise man's highest powers. Wisdom is, in short, "a union of science and intuition—science crowned with the knowledge of the things best worth knowing."⁴³

This definition marks it off from both prudence and political science. It cannot be prudence, because prudence deals exclusively with particular cases and knows nothing of first principles; it cannot be political science, for politics is not the highest subject that can exercise human intelligence. Nor does it make any difference that man is the highest of animals, for there are other things in the world of a higher nature than man, namely those most conspicuous objects of which the kosmos is made up.⁴⁴

"Common language supports this view; men like Thales and Anaxagoras are called wise, but no one calls them prudent, for they are seen to neglect their private interests

⁴² τὴν δὲ σοφίαν ἐν τε ταῖς τέχναις τοῖς ἀκριβεστάτοις τὰς τέχνας ἀποδίδομεν. 1141, a 9.

⁴³ ὥστ' εἴη αὖ ἡ σοφία νοῦς καὶ ἐπιστήμη, ὥσπερ κεφαλὴν ἔχουσα ἐπιστήμη τῶν τιμιωτάτων. 1141, a 18.

⁴⁴ εἰ δ' ὅτι βέλτιστον ἄνθρωπος τῶν ἄλλων ζώων οὐδὲν διαφέρει· καὶ γὰρ ἄνθρωπον ἄλλα πολὺ θείστερα τὴν φύσιν, οἷον φανερώτατά γε ἐξ ὧν ὁ κόσμος συνέστηκεν. 1140, a 33. These are what Aristotle calls elsewhere τὰ θεῖα σώματα κατὰ τὸν οὐρανόν. Met. 11. 8, 1074. a 30.

and to occupy themselves with out-of-the-way subjects, difficult and full of nice distinctions, but useless.⁴⁵ This shows how different wisdom is from prudence. Prudence deals with matters of human interest about which it is possible to deliberate; it would be idle to deliberate about what can only happen in one way, and purposeless to deliberate at all unless you have an end in view, and that end some practical good.

"When we speak of a man as of good counsel without qualifying the expression, we mean he is able to make a rational guess at what is practically best for a man to do.⁴⁶ Although a prudent man acts on general rules, what is chiefly necessary for him is particular knowledge, and hence some men with no general knowledge succeed in practice better than those who have it, as, for instance, empirics. If you know that light food is wholesome and easily digestible, but do not know what food is light, you cannot produce health as well as a man who knows simply that poultry is wholesome. Prudence has to deal with conduct; it must have general rules and empirical rules—and of the two, the latter are more important to it.⁴⁷ But even in the case of prudence, largely as it is guided by particular and empirical considerations, there is a master art to which all its considerations are subordinate, namely politics, whose function is to prescribe what men ought to do or abstain from doing."⁴⁸

⁴⁵ περιττὰ μὲν καὶ θαυμαστὰ καὶ χαλεπὰ καὶ δαιμόνια εἰδέναι αὐτοὺς φασιν, ἄχρηστα δέ. 1141, b 6.

⁴⁶ ὁ δ' ἀπλῶς εὐβουλος ὁ τοῦ ἀρίστου ἀνθρώπου τῶν πρακτῶν στοχαστικὸς κατὰ τὸν λογισμόν. 1141, b 12.

⁴⁷ ἡ δὲ φρόνησις πρακτική· ὥστε δεῖ ἅμφω ἔχειν, ἡ ταύτην μάλλον. 1141, b 21.

⁴⁸ εἴη δ' ἂν τις καὶ ἐνταῦθα ἀρχιτεκτονική. 1141, b 22. Cf. 1094, b 2 sqq.

CHAPTER 8.—“Although politics and prudence are the same habit of mind they are not the same thing. If we consider politics we find in it the divisions that have just been pointed out in prudence; there is a generally regulative or architectonic side called legislation, determining the end of politics in the widest way and saying what men ought to do and what they ought to refrain from,⁴⁹ and there is a practical and deliberative side, usually known by the common term “politics,” which gives specific orders in particular cases; a resolution of the Assembly for instance, or a vote on account, pointing to a definite something to be done which does not require to be followed by any other step.⁵⁰

In the same way prudence is popularly conceived to be chiefly occupied with the individual, and indeed to prudence of this kind the name is usually assigned; but there are other kinds of prudence which have to do with the household or with legislation, or with what is specifically called politics, and of politics there are the deliberative and judicial branches.⁵¹ It appears, therefore, that to know what is good for oneself is but one kind of that knowledge which has been called “knowledge of what is good for man,” or prudence.

But much difference of opinion has arisen on the point, and some have thought that he who looks after his own affairs is the really prudent man, and that politicians

⁴⁹ [πολιτικῆς] νομοθετοῦσης τι δεῖ πράττειν καὶ τίνων ἀπέχεσθαι. 1094, b 5.

⁵⁰ αὕτη δὲ πρακτικὴ καὶ βουλευτικὴ· τὸ γὰρ ψήφισμα πρακτὸν ὥς τὸ ἔσχατον. 1141, b 26.

⁵¹ δοκεῖ δὲ καὶ φρόνησις μάλιστ' εἶναι ἢ περὶ αὐτὸν καὶ ἕνα καὶ ἔχει αὕτη τὸ κοινὸν ὄνομα φρόνησις· ἐκείνων δὲ ἢ μὲν οἰκονομία ἢ δὲ νομοθεσία ἢ δὲ πολιτικὴ, καὶ ταύτης ἢ μὲν βουλευτικὴ ἢ δὲ δικαστικὴ. 1141, b 29.

are busy-bodies; so Euripides says, "How can I be thought prudent when I could have got my share, merely as one of the army, without troubling myself?"⁵² Men who act in this way, seeking their individual good, consider that they are right in doing so, and they are accordingly known as prudent; and yet perhaps it is impossible for a man successfully to advance his private interests without considering the interests of his household or of the state.⁵³ Moreover, it is not always plain how one's own separate interests are to be promoted; some consideration is necessary. Hence, whilst the young may be geometricians and mathematicians, they are not wise or prudent. The reason is that prudence requires a knowledge of particular facts which can only be known by experience, and young people have no experience, for this only comes in course of time.

"If we ask why a boy may become a mathematician but cannot be wise or understand physics,⁵⁴ the reason is that the principles on which wisdom and physics depend are derived from experience, whilst the principles of mathematics are abstract; in the former case principles are not realised, in the latter their truth is not matter of doubt. Again, mistakes in deliberation arise either in general or particular propositions, and prudence is exclusively concerned with the latter; prudence is not

⁵² πῶς δ' ἂν φρονοῖην, ᾧ παρῆν ἀπραγμόνως
ἐν τοῖσι πολλοῖς ἡριθμημένῳ στρατοῦ
ἴσον μέσχειν; 1142, a 3.

⁵³ καίτοι ἴσως οὐκ ἔστι τὸ αὐτοῦ εὔ ἄνευ οἰκονομίας οὐδ' ἄνευ πολιτείας. 1142, a 9.

⁵⁴ Physics here means what we should understand by natural philosophy; it is not the subject which forms one of the branches of the first philosophy.

science; it is the knowledge of the specific facts which regulate conduct.⁵⁵

"Prudence is therefore the antithesis of scientific intuition; scientific intuition apprehends an ultimate fact, a scientific datum for which no reason can be given; prudence apprehends an ultimate fact, but one which is not a datum of science but of perception, not, however, of the perception of the special senses, but of that perception by which we are conscious of number, figure, and suchlike, for here, too, we shall get to a point beyond which we cannot proceed; this, however, is more properly perception than prudence—it is another species of prudence."⁵⁶

55 ὅτι δ' ἡ φρόνησις οὐκ ἐπιστήμη φανερόν· τοῦ γὰρ ἐσχάτου ἐστίν, ὥσπερ εἴρηται· τὸ γὰρ πρακτὸν τοιοῦτον. 1142, a 23.

56 ἀντίκειται μὲν δὴ τῷ νῷ· ὁ μὲν γὰρ νοῦς τῶν ὄρων, ὧν οὐκ ἔστι λόγος, ἡ δὲ τοῦ ἐσχάτου· οὗ οὐκ ἔστιν ἐπιστήμη ἀλλ' αἰσθησις, οὐκ ἡ τῶν ἰδίων, ἀλλ' οἷα αἰσθανόμεδα ὅτι τὸ ἐν τοῖς μαθηματικοῖς ἐσχάτου τρίγωνον· στήσεται γὰρ κάκεϊ· ἀλλ' αὕτη μᾶλλον αἰσθησις ἢ φρόνησις, ἐκείνης δ' ἄλλο εἶδος. 1142, a 25. ὅρος, in Aristotelian logic meaning the term of a proposition, here signifies a proposition itself (Bonitz, s.v. 530, a 40). The propositions which it is the business of scientific intuition to apprehend are the ultimate propositions of demonstrative science which, admitting of no proof, must, if knowable, be immediately known (ἄμεσοι ἀρχαί). ἀμέσου ἀρχῆς συλλογιστικῆς, θέσιν μὲν λέγω ἣν μὴ ἔστι δεῖξαι, μήδ' ἀνάγκη ἔχειν τὸν μαθησόμενον τι· ἣν δ' ἀνάγκη ἔχειν τὸν ὁτιοῦν μαθησόμενον, ἀξίωμα. Anal. Post. i. 2. 72, a 14. The facts with which prudence as a practical faculty has to do are also ultimate, but ultimate in the other direction; they are the result of an analysis which, as explained in Book

Prudence and wisdom have now both been defined, and with regard to wisdom it has been shown how it differs from other faculties with which it might be, and with some of which it is, occasionally confused. It remains to perform the same service for prudence, which, as being a process of inquiry, was liable to be mistaken for other similar processes from which it really

III., Chapter 3, brings you to a point beyond which you cannot go, where you must cease to reflect and commence to act. This point is called τὸ πρῶτον αἷτιον, ὃ ἐν τῇ εὐρήσει ἐσχατον ἔστιν. 1112, b 19. The last presentation of sense to which deliberation has brought you—the consciousness of a fact which so far as your action is concerned is ultimate—is in the passage before us likened to that form of the ultimate proposition of demonstration distinguished by Aristotle as hypothesis, an assumption that a thing is or is not (τὸ εἶναί τι ἢ τὸ μὴ εἶναί τι. Anal. Post. i. 2. 72, a 20): this is also a point beyond which you cannot go. The consciousness of the first cause in action (1112, b 19) is of course not prudence; it is a fact which prudence recognises and with which it must deal (μᾶλλον αἰσθησις ἢ φρόνησις, ἐκείνης ἄλλο εἶδος (1142, a 29). It is an intuition which furnishes the starting point of action, just as the intuitions of science are the starting points of demonstration. Hence νοῦς is used of both kinds of intuition; it apprehends what is ultimate in both directions. καὶ ὁ νοῦς τῶν ἐσχάτων ἐπ' ἀμφοτέρα· καὶ γὰρ τῶν πρῶτων ὄρων καὶ τῶν ἐσχάτων νοῦς ἐστὶ καὶ οὐ λόγος, καὶ ὁ μὲν κατὰ τὰς ἀποδείξεις τῶν ἀκινήτων ὄρων καὶ πρῶτων, ὁ δ' ἐν ταῖς πρακτικαῖς τοῦ ἐσχάτου καὶ ἐνδεχομένου καὶ τῆς ἐτέρας προτάσεως. 1142, a 35. This passage fixes the meaning of ὄροι and λόγος in 1142, a 26 (ὁ μὲν γὰρ νοῦς τῶν ὄρων ὧν οὐκ ἔστι λόγος), “intuition apprehends those propositions for which no reason can be given.”

differs. And first of the habit of taking good counsel (εὐβουλία). If we turn to Plato's Protagoras we find that a very wide meaning was often, and we may infer, popularly given to the word. It was supposed to include the ability to manage well both a man's own private affairs and those of the state, a signification as extensive as prudence itself considered as a master art (ἀρχιτεκτονικὴ φρόνησις. 1141, b 25). "If Hippocrates comes to me," says Protagoras, "he will learn what he wants to know, that is, how he may best be able to manage his own household, and in public affairs, too, how he may become most capable of speech and action."⁵⁷

Aristotle accordingly begins by considering the faculty of taking good counsel, and distinguishing it from prudence.

CHAPTER 9.—"What, then, is the power of counselling or deliberating well? Is it science or opinion or the knack of making good guesses, or is it generically different to any of these? Obviously it is not science, for science knows, she does not inquire; nor is it good guesswork, for this is done rapidly and without reflection, whereas deliberation takes time; nor is it even that variety of happy guessing which is called acuteness or shrewdness (ἀγχινοια), and which enables you to hit off the reason of a thing at once;⁵⁸ nor is it opinion of any kind. To

⁵⁷ τὸ δὲ μάθημά ἐστιν εὐβουλία περὶ τῶν οἰκείων, ὅπως ἂν ἄριστα τὴν αὐτοῦ οἰκίαν διοικοῖ, καὶ περὶ τῆς πόλεως, ὅπως τὰ τῆς πόλεως δυνατώτατος ἂν εἴη καὶ πράττειν καὶ λέγειν. Plato, Protagoras 318 E.

⁵⁸ Aristotle defines acuteness as making a good shot at a middle term without hesitation (εὐστοχία τις ἐν ἀσκέπτῳ χρόνῳ τοῦ μέσου), e.g., "You are talking to a rich man and you see at once why he is borrowing money; or you

counsel well implies a kind of rightness, not however of science, because science never makes mistakes, and people who give good counsel sometimes do; nor of opinion, because rightness of opinion is truth and not probability, and also because everything on which you form an opinion is by that very process defined, whereas good counselling is a process of reasoning which has not yet arrived at a definite result.⁵⁹

It follows that good counselling must be the correctness of a mental process; a mental process affirms nothing, and good counselling affirms nothing.⁶⁰

Good counselling is, then, a kind of correctness in deliberation, but to which of the many kinds of correctness should it be assigned? The man of feeble purpose and the vicious man may both obtain the ends they propose to themselves by correct deliberation, although those ends are bad and harm and not good is the result. It would seem that to counsel well implies the attainment of a good object, but even a good object may be attained by an incorrect process; one or both of your premisses may be false, and yet you may conclude rightly in spite of them; this will not do, both the end and the means must be right.⁶¹ Another limitation must be added.

guess why A is your friend—he hates your enemy.” Anal. Post. i. 34. 89, b 10.

⁵⁹ ἄμα δὲ καὶ ὤρισταί ἤδη πᾶν οὗ δόξα ἐστίν. ἀλλὰ μὴν οὐδ’ ἄνευ λόγου ἢ εὐβουλία. 1142, b 11.

⁶⁰ διανοίας ἄρα λείπεται· αὕτη γὰρ [εὐβουλία] οὕτω φάσις. 1142, b 12. “Cogitandi actio, quæ διανοία vocatur, præcipue cernitur in notionibus vel conjungendis vel dirimendis: τὸ ψεῦδος καὶ τὸ ἀληθές οὐκ ἐν τοῖς πράγμασιν, ἀλλ’ ἐν διανοίᾳ. Met. 5. 4. 1027, b 29.” Bonitz, s.v. p. 186, a 52.

⁶¹ οὐδ’ αὕτη που εὐβουλία, καθ’ ἣν οὗ δεῖ μὲν τυγχάνει, οὗ μέντοι δι’ οὗ ἔδει. 1142, b 24.

Deliberation may be too protracted; counsel cannot be said to be good unless it is in time to be useful.⁶²

Finally, the end of good counsel may be either absolute or relative, and if it is one of the qualifications of a prudent man to be able to counsel well, prudence must have something to say to the ends in view. Good counsel may therefore be defined as "a correct and useful kind of deliberation directed to an end of whose expediency prudence forms a true conception."⁶³

CHAPTER 10.—This chapter farther limits prudence by distinguishing it from good sense (*περὶ τὰ αὐτὰ μὲν τῇ φρονήσει ἐστίν, οὐκ ἔστι δὲ τὸ αὐτὸ σύνεσις καὶ φρόνησις*. 1143, a 6).

"Sense and good sense as usually understood have nothing to do either with opinion, nor with science generally, nor even with any special sciences such as medicine or geometry; the terms are not applicable to things which are eternal and unchangeable, nor yet to things which happen according to no rule; their subject matter is whatever we feel difficulties about and deliberate upon. They embrace therefore the subjects with which prudence deals, but good sense is not prudence. Prudence is directory, good sense is merely

⁶² ὀρθότης ἢ κατὰ τὸ ὠφέλιμον. 1142, b 27.

⁶³ εὐβουλία εἴη ἂν ὀρθότης ἢ κατὰ τὸ συμφέρον πρὸς τὸ τέλος οὗ ἢ φρόνησις ἀληθοῦς ὑποληψίς ἐστιν. 1142, b 32. Prudence does not fix the end, and strictly speaking, cannot form a true conception of it; the end is said (in 1145, a 5) to be given by προαίρεσις: ἢ μὲν γὰρ [προαίρεσις] τὸ τέλος, ἢ δὲ [φρόνησις] τὰ πρὸς τὸ τέλος ποιεῖ πράττειν. φρόνησις is here loosely used for the combination of φρόνησις and νοῦς, which both selects means and fixes ends; prudence in the person of the prudent man. (See p. 375.)

critical. By a sensible man we do not mean one who acts prudently, but one who uses his critical faculty rightly, as a listener, on subjects with which prudence deals. Just as "to understand" often means "to be aware of," or "to be sensible of," when a man is using his scientific faculties, so when a man makes use of his opinion as a hearer to form a correct judgment on the matter with which prudence deals, he is said to understand or be sensible. Hence the word sense."⁶⁴

CHAPTER 11.—An important chapter, showing the care with which Aristotle discriminates the various circumstances in which the prudent man is called upon to act. He may have to act upon his own account, or as an adviser or critic of others. At Athens it would be chiefly as a Dicast or as a member of the General Assembly that his critical faculty would be called into play. What he requires in those capacities is the kind of intelligent opinion described in the last chapter. But Aristotle recollects that this will not be in all cases enough; a critical judgment may require to be modified by looking at the matter from the point of view of the person criticised, and the quality called in this chapter "Thoughtfulness" will in that case be brought into play.

Thoughtfulness is to prudence what equity is to justice; it corrects, by a sympathetic attitude, the harshness of what may be on the facts a perfectly justifiable opinion. The equitable man says, "These are my rights, but if I were on the other side I should think it unfair that they should be enforced against me, so I will abate

⁶⁴ ὥσπερ τὸ μανθάνειν λέγεται συνιέναι, ὅταν χρῆται τῇ ἐπιστήμῃ, οὕτως ἐν τῇ χρῆσθαι τῇ δόξῃ ἐπὶ τὸ κρίνειν περὶ τούτων περὶ ὧν ἡ φρόνησις ἐστίν, ἄλλου λέγοντος, καὶ κρίνειν καλῶς—καὶ ἐντεῦθεν ἐλήλυθε τοῦνομα ἡ σύνεσις. 1143, a 12.

something." The thoughtful man, where as a listener or critic he has to form an opinion on private or public matters of conduct, endeavours to put himself in the place of those whom he judges and modifies his view accordingly; he is "thoughtful for others" (*συγγνώμων*). But Aristotle properly insists that feeling must not be allowed to get the upper hand, by adding "The correct judgment is the judgment of truth"; the sympathetic view must not overlook the plain facts of the case. Where no duty to form a judgment is involved, "gnômê" may be translated "thoughtfulness," and "syngnômê" "thoughtfulness for others."

Aristotle's own words are these: "The faculty called thoughtfulness, by the possession of which people are said to be thoughtful for others, is the correct judgment of the equitable man; for it is a special attribute of the equitable man to consider others, and it is equitable to have this feeling on certain subjects and in certain cases. Thoughtfulness for others is accordingly the critical and correct view of the equitable man; by correct is meant true."⁶⁵

"All the habits mentioned above, point, as we might expect, in the same direction; we speak of thoughtfulness, good sense, prudence and intuition as attributes of the same persons; all these faculties deal with ultimate and particular facts, and it is because he forms a critical judgment on the matters on which the prudent man has to act, that a person is called either sensible or thoughtful for others. The equitable point of view is common to all good men in their relations to others."⁶⁶

⁶⁵ ἡ δὲ συγγνώμη γνώμη ἐστὶ κριτικὴ τοῦ ἐπιεικοῦς ὁρθή· ὁρθὴ δ' ἡ τοῦ ἀληθοῦς. 1143, a 23.

⁶⁶ τὰ γὰρ ἐπιεικῇ κοινὰ τῶν ἀγαθῶν ἀπάντων ἐστὶν ἐν τῷ πρὸς ἄλλον. 1143, a 31.

"All conduct is about particulars, and the faculty called *Noûs* or intuition has to do with particulars in both directions, for it is intuition and not reason which apprehends as well first as last propositions.⁶⁷ In the former case, when used for the purpose of demonstrative science, it apprehends the first principles of necessary matter; in the latter case, as the faculty used in conduct, it apprehends the lowest propositions of contingent matter—the minor proposition of the practical syllogism.⁶⁸ It is from such particulars that rules of conduct are generalised; they are, therefore, very necessary to be perceived, and *Noûs* is the faculty which perceives them.⁶⁹ The power of perception would seem to be a natural gift, and hence thoughtfulness, sense, and intuitive perception are gifts of nature, which wisdom cannot be. It may be adduced in proof of this that the qualities of thoughtfulness and sense, and intuitive perception vary with age, pointing to the fact that they are due to nature.⁷⁰ For this reason we ought to attend to men of age and experience, as much when they give opinions which cannot be proved as when they speak what they know; such men see straight, for experience has given them an eye."⁷¹

⁶⁷ καὶ ὁ νοῦς τῶν ἐσχάτων ἐπ' ἀμφοτέρα· καὶ γὰρ τῶν πρώτων ὄρων καὶ τῶν ἐσχάτων νοῦς ἐστὶ καὶ οὐ λόγος. 1143, a 35.

⁶⁸ καὶ ὁ μὲν κατὰ τὰς ἀποδείξεις τῶν ἀκινήτων ὄρων καὶ πρώτων, ὁ δ' ἐν ταῖς πρακτικαῖς τῶν ἐσχάτων καὶ ἐνδεχομένων καὶ τῆς ἐτέρας προτάσεως. 1143, b 1.

⁶⁹ ἀρχαὶ γὰρ τοῦ οὗ ἕνεκα αὐται· ἐκ τῶν καθ' ἕκαστα γὰρ τὰ καθόλου· τούτων οὖν δεῖ ἔχειν αἰσθησιν, αὕτη δ' ἐστὶ νοῦς. 1143, b 4.

⁷⁰ ὡς τῆς φύσεως αἰτίας οὔσης. 1143, b 9.

⁷¹ διὰ γὰρ τὸ ἔχειν ἐκ τῆς ἐμπειρίας ὄμμα, ὁρῶσιν ὁρθῶς. 1143, b 13.

CHAPTER 12.—Aristotle has now described prudence and wisdom, and shown the subjects with which they are respectively concerned, and he has pointed out that each is a distinctive excellence of the rational part of the mind. If so, they must be useful as conducing to happiness. Doubts had, however, been raised as to their utility, and it is expedient that such doubts should be removed. The first eight paragraphs of the twelfth chapter deal with this matter. The remainder of the chapter distinguishes prudence from cleverness.

“Some one may raise a doubt as to the usefulness of wisdom and prudence. It may be said that wisdom does not consider the things which produce human happiness, for it has nothing to do with production in any form. Prudence can do this, but why, it is urged, do we need it?⁷² We do not need it, if it be that prudence is the faculty which is concerned with things just and honourable and good for man; for these are the very things which a good man does, and mere knowledge does not make him more likely to do them,⁷³ the virtues being settled tendencies to act in a particular way. The acts follow naturally from the habit as in the case of health, and in all other cases where the question is, not how a habit should be created, but what will be the result of the habit when created.⁷⁴ If however we think, not of the

⁷² ἡ μὲν γὰρ σοφία οὐδὲν θεωρεῖ ἐξ ὧν ἔσται εὐδαιμόνων ἄνθρωπος—οὐδεμίας γάρ ἐστι γενέσεως—ἡ δὲ φρόνησις τοῦτο μὲν ἔχει ἀλλὰ τίνος ἕνεκα δεῖ αὐτῆς; 1143, b 19.

⁷³ πρὸς δὲ τὸ τὰς ἀρετὰς τὸ μὲν εἰδέναι οὐδὲν ἢ μικρὸν ἰσχύει. 1105, b 2.

⁷⁴ ὅσα μὴ τῷ ποιεῖν ἀλλὰ τῷ ἀπὸ τῆς ἕξεως εἶναι λέγεται. 1143, b 26.

results of prudence but of how men may be made prudent,⁷⁵ it may be urged that prudence is useless to those who are already good, for they can dispense with it; and useless also to those who do not possess it, for it makes no difference to them whether they are themselves prudent or whether they follow the lead of some one who is. What suffices in the case of our bodily health will suffice here; if we want to be well we do not read medical books, we go to a doctor.⁷⁶

"Another argument is, that it would be out of place to put prudence before wisdom, which would be the result of saying that prudence makes us good, for the faculty which acts is in every case the dominant one.⁷⁷

"The answer to these various objections is—(1) prudence and wisdom are necessarily and in themselves desirable possessions, even if they produce no effect, each being the excellence of a different division of rational life; then, (2) they do in fact produce an effect, for wisdom produces happiness, not indeed in the way in which medical treatment produces health, but in the way in which a healthy habit of body produces it,⁷⁸ for wisdom being a part of goodness as a whole, makes a man happy by the mere fact of being possessed and used. Again, wisdom accomplishes its special work in conformity with

⁷⁵ εἰ δὲ μὴ τούτων χάριν φρόνιμον ῥητέον ἀλλὰ τοῦ γίνεσθαι. 1143, b 28.

⁷⁶ βουλόμενοι γὰρ ὑγαίνειν ὅμως οὐ μανθάνομεν ἰατρικὴν. 1134, b 32.

⁷⁷ ἄτοπον ἂν εἶναι δόξειεν εἰ χείρων τῆς σοφίας οὔσα κυριώτερα αὐτῆς ἔσται· ἡ γὰρ ποιοῦσα ἄρχει καὶ ἐπιτάττει περὶ ἑκάστων. 1143, b 33.

⁷⁸ Wisdom makes a man happy much as pleasure does, οὐκ ὡς ἡ ἕξις ἐνυπάρχουσα, ἀλλ' ὡς ἐπιγινόμενόν τι τέλος, οἶον τοῖς ἀκμαίοις ἡ ὥρα. 1174, b 32.

prudence and moral goodness; goodness places the mark aright, and prudence takes a good aim at it.⁷⁹ (There is no virtue of this kind in the fourth part of the soul which regulates the processes of growth.) (3) As to the objection that prudence does not make us more capable of acting rightly, let us take a somewhat higher point of view and look at the matter from that point:⁸⁰ now, exactly as we say that people may do what is just without being just, as when they discharge duties imposed on them by law unwillingly or through ignorance or from any reason other than the simple desire to obey the law, so it would seem possible for a man to have a disposition to do the things that are right for the sake of doing so.⁸¹ Now it is goodness which makes his purpose right, but to take the steps which are necessary to effectuate his purpose belongs, not to goodness but to another faculty.⁸² To understand the point requires a little mental application.⁸³ There is a certain faculty called cleverness, whose characteristic is that it is capable of doing whatever may be necessary to secure any end, good or bad, which may be proposed. If the end be good the faculty is laudable; if bad, it is mere unscrupulousness. Hence, prudent people are sometimes called un-

⁷⁹ ἡ μὲν γὰρ ἀρετὴ τὸν σκόπον ποιεῖ ὀρθόν, ἡ δὲ φρόνησις τὰ πρὸς τοῦτον. 1144, a 7.

⁸⁰ μικρὸν ἄνωθεν ἀρκεῖον, λαβόντας ἀρχὴν ταύτην. 1144, a 12.

⁸¹ ἔστι τὸ πῶς ἔχοντα πράττειν ἕκαστα ὥστ' εἶναι ἀγαθόν, λέγω δ' οἷον διὰ προαίρεσιν καὶ αὐτῶν ἕνεκα τῶν πραττομένων. 1144, a 18. The inference is not obvious.

⁸² τὴν μὲν οὖν προαίρεσιν ὀρθὴν ποιεῖ ἡ ἀρετή, τὸ δ' ὅσα ἐκείνης ἕνεκα πέφυκε πράττεσθαι οὐκ ἐστὶ τῆς ἀρετῆς ἀλλ' ἐτέρας δυνάμεως. 1144, a 20.

⁸³ λεκτέον ἐπιστήσασι σαφέστερον περὶ αὐτῶν. 1144, a 22.

scrupulous. Of course, prudence is not to be identified with this faculty, but it shares the quality which the faculty possesses of devising means to an end. To have the habit of seeing what ought to be done, to use the mind's eye, so to speak, is clearly a good quality, as has been already pointed out.⁸⁴ Now the reasonings employed in conduct assume an end of some kind as the best end—any end will do, so far as the argument is concerned—but the true end does not occur to any one but a good man, for vice warps the nature and causes him to make mistakes in the principles of conduct. It is evident, therefore, that a man cannot be prudent except he be good.”

CHAPTER 13.—“We will now resume the subject of virtue. Virtue corresponds in its distinctions to the difference between prudence and cleverness, natural virtue standing to complete virtue in a relation similar to, although not the same as, that in which cleverness stands to prudence.⁸⁵ Our moral qualities, as every one agrees, are in a certain sense natural attributes. We are just, temperate, brave and so forth, from the moment of our birth; and yet we seek something beyond, namely

⁸⁴ The metaphor as well as the distinction here taken is borrowed from Plato, *Repub.* vii. 519 A. ἡ οὐπω ἐννεονόηκας, τῶν λεγομένων πονηρῶν μὲν, σοφῶν δέ, ὡς δριμύ μὲν βλέπει τὸ ψυχάριον καὶ ὀξέως διορᾷ τὰυτα ἐφ' ἃ τέτραπται, ὡς οὐ φαύλην ἔχον τὴν ὄψιν, κακία δ' ἠναγκασμένον ὑπηρετεῖν, ὅσω ἂν ὀξύτερον βλέπῃ, τοσοῦτῳ πλείω κακὰ ἐργαζόμενον;

⁸⁵ καὶ γὰρ ἡ ἀρετὴ παραπλησίως ἔχει ὡς ἡ φρόνησις πρὸς τὴν δεινότητα—οὐ ταὐτὸ μὲν, ὁμοιον δέ—οὕτω καὶ ἡ φυσικὴ ἀρετὴ πρὸς τὴν κυρίαν. 1144, b 2.

complete virtue, recognising that the natural virtues come to us in a different way.⁸⁶ For the natural dispositions just spoken of are found both in children and in the lower animals, but without prudence they appear hurtful; this much at any rate is clear, that just as a strong body blindly moving itself often falls heavily from want of sight, so natural dispositions lead to great errors from want of judgment, but if practical intelligence be present it makes a difference, and the natural disposition which before only resembled complete good conduct will in that case be identical with it.⁸⁷ As, therefore, the deliberative division of the mind has two forms, cleverness and prudence, so there are two forms of moral conduct, the natural and the complete, and to the latter prudence is indispensable.

“This fact, that the intellectual quality of prudence is an essential condition of good conduct, has led some to maintain that all virtue is prudence; Sokrates was on this point partly right and partly wrong; he was wrong in thinking that all virtue is prudence, but he was right in saying that it could not exist without it.⁸⁸ It is some evidence of this that every one defining virtue says not only what its objects are, but adds that it is a habit in accordance with right reason, meaning by right, prudent. Let us make a slight change in the above

⁸⁶ οὐτ' ἄρα φύσει οὔτε παρὰ φύσιν ἐγγίνονται αἱ ἀρεταί, ἀλλὰ πεφυκότες μὲν ἡμῖν δέξασθαι αὐτάς, τελειουμένοις δὲ διὰ τοῦ ἔθους. 1103, a 23.

⁸⁷ ἡ δ' ἔξις ὁμοία οὔσα τοτ' ἔσται κυρίως ἀρετή. 1144, b 13.

⁸⁸ Σωκράτης τῇ μὲν ὁρθῶς ἐζήτει τῇ δ' ἡμάρτανεν· ὅτι μὲν γὰρ φρονήσεις ᾧετο εἶναι πάσας τὰς ἀρετάς, ἡμάρτανεν, ὅτι δ' οὐκ ἄνευ φρονήσεως, καλῶς ἔλεγεν. 1144, b 18.

definition, and say that virtue is a habit of acting, not only in accordance with, but in conjunction with, right reason, and that in matters of conduct right reason means prudence.⁸⁹

"Sokrates, as I have mentioned, was of opinion that the virtues are modes of reasoning, for he called them sciences, but we say they are accompanied by a special mode of reasoning, *i.e.* prudence. All this shows that it is impossible to be virtuous in the full sense without prudence, and that prudence is inseparable from moral virtue."⁹⁰

"I may add that the dialectical argument about the virtues being separate⁹¹ may be answered by what has been said above; it is said that the same man has not a good natural disposition to each and every virtue, and may therefore be considered to have one and not to have another. This is possible in the case of natural excellence, but if we look to the excellence with reference to

⁸⁹ δεῖ δὲ μικρὸν μεταβῆναι. ἔστι γὰρ οὐ μόνον ἡ κατὰ τὸν ὁρθὸν λόγον, ἀλλ' ἡ μετὰ τοῦ ὁρθοῦ λόγου ἕξις ἀρετῆς. 1144, b 25.

⁹⁰ 1144, b 28.

⁹¹ The dialectical discussion as to the unity or plurality of the virtues here referred to is no doubt that in the Protagoras, 330 E sqq.: πότερον οὖν, ἢν δ' ἐγώ, καὶ μεταλαμβάνουσιν οἱ ἄνθρωποι τούτων τῶν τῆς ἀρετῆς μορίων οἱ μὲν ἄλλο, οἱ δὲ ἄλλο, ἢ ἀνάγκη, ἐάνπερ τις ἐν λάβῃ, ἅπαντ' ἔχειν; οὐδαμῶς, ἔφη, ἐπεὶ πολλοὶ ἀνδρεῖοί εἰσιν, ἄδικοι δέ, καὶ δίκαιοι αὖ, σοφοὶ δὲ οὐ, κτέ. The argument by which Sokrates proves the unity of virtue is purely verbal—Aristotle thinks it a better argument to say that the virtues are brought under one head by their common possession of prudence. See page 195.

which a man is called simply, 'good,' it is not possible, for if he possess the one attribute of prudence all the excellences of conduct will be attributable to him.⁹²

"But even were we to grant prudence to be inoperative in conduct, it is a necessary part of it, both as being the characteristic excellence of one division of rational life, namely the deliberative, and also because moral choice cannot rightly be made without it, nor indeed without a virtuous disposition, for the disposition fixes the end and prudence causes us to do what conduces to

⁹² τοῦτο γὰρ κατὰ μὲν τὰς φυσικὰς ἐνδέχεται, καθ' ἧς δὲ ἀπλῶς λέγεται ἀγαθός, οὐκ ἐνδέχεται· ἅμα γὰρ φρονήσει μιᾷ οὖσθι πᾶσαι ὑπάρξουσιν. 1144, b 35. "Natural virtue," being a matter of physical constitution, does not require prudence for its exercise; "moral virtue" cannot be exercised without prudence. This does not mean that if a man be prudent he will be brave, just, and liberal as well; this would make good conduct a mere matter of intellect; it means that prudence is a predicate under which all kinds of good conduct fall. As to the expression, ὑπάρχειν τινι is often used by Aristotle in the sense of falling under the predication of a thing. See Bonitz (Met. v. 15. 1040, a 14), "Commutatam esse apparet vim voc. ὑπάρχειν, ut non significet esse in complexu (*Inhalt*) alicujus notionis, sed contineri in ejus ambitu (*Umfang*), quod alibi v. μετέχειν significatum legimus, cf. Top. iv. 1. 121, a 12": τὰ μὲν εἶδη μετέχει τῶν γένων, τὰ δὲ γένη τῶν εἰδῶν οὕ. The virtues are thus μετὰ λόγου; they participate in the common attribute of prudence as a rational quality. See p. 197 *ante*, and Eth. 10. 8, 1178, a 16, where it is said that prudence and moral goodness are "yoked together," that a man cannot be good unless he be prudent, nor prudent unless he be good.

the end.⁹³ Prudence is not, however, the mistress of wisdom nor of the better part of the mind any more than medical art is the mistress of health. Medical art does not make use of health as an instrument, but only looks how it may be produced; it gives orders, not to it but for it; we might as well say that politics rule the gods because they regulate everything that the city does, including what is done for the honour of the gods.⁹⁴

⁹³ δῆλον δέ, κἂν εἰ μὴ πρακτικὴ ᾦν, ὅτι ἔδει ἂν αὐτῆς διὰ τὸ τοῦ μορίου ἀρετὴν εἶναι καὶ ὅτι οὐκ ἔσται ἡ προαίρεσις ὁρᾷ ἄνευ φρονήσεως οὐδ' ἄνευ ἀρετῆς· ἢ μὲν γὰρ τὸ τέλος ἢ δὲ τὰ πρὸς τὸ τέλος ποιεῖ πράττειν. 1145, a 2.

⁹⁴ ἐκείνης οὖν ἕνεκα ἐπιτάττει, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐκείνη· ἔτι ὁμοιον κἂν εἴ τις τὴν πολιτικὴν φαίη ἄρχειν τῶν θεῶν, ὅτι ἐπιτάττει περὶ πάντα τὰ ἐν τῇ πόλει. 1145, a 9.

REMARKS

THE psychology of the sixth book, as has already more than once been said, is not that of Aristotle's special work on the subject. He adopts the view taken in what he calls exoteric discourses, where, as here and in the second book,⁹⁵ the parts of the mind or soul were described by a divided line after the manner of Plato in the sixth book of the Republic.⁹⁶ This is a simple and convenient way of pointing out to an audience the various functions of mind, and letting them see on a diagram how they stand related to each other. But it is a purely artificial device, and it assumes the mind to be divisible into distinct parts, in direct opposition to Aristotle's own theory; it leads, moreover, to the inference that the portion of life distinguished as mind or reason can be resolved into a definite number of independent faculties capable of acting separately from each other. Where scientific accuracy is not an object and it is wished merely to distinguish one kind of knowledge

⁹⁵ 1102, a 26.

⁹⁶ καί μοι ἐπὶ τοῖς τέτταρσι τμήμασι τέτταρα ταῦτα παθήματα ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ γιγνόμενα λαβέ, νοήσιν μὲν ἐπὶ τῷ ἀνωτάτῳ, διάνοιαν δὲ ἐπὶ τῷ δευτέρῳ, τῷ τρίτῳ δὲ πίστιν ἀπόδος καὶ τῷ τελευταίῳ εἰκασίαν. Plat. Repub. 509 D.

from another in respect of its exactness or subject matter, the assumption of independent faculties may be made without serious objection and with some advantage as regards clearness of exposition. But the case is different when, as in this book, the analysis is conducted with the view of explaining conduct. No one knew better than Aristotle that man is a compound being, with tendencies natural and acquired, passions, appetites and intellectual qualities, all acting and reacting on each other in such a way as to make it impossible for practical purposes to disentangle them. Health, to take his favourite illustration, depends on a consensus of the various structures and organs of the body. The anatomist, for the purpose of demonstration, may and does examine these parts severally and describes as well as he can their independent use and function. But the physician endeavouring to produce health is compelled to consider the body as a whole—he does not think of the parts and mentally compound the action of such of them as he deems to be involved in the case before him; he treats a concrete case, *καθ' ἕκαστον ἰατρεύει*. Now in this book Aristotle proceeds, not on the physiological, but on the anatomical method. “The modes by which the mind arrives at truth” are separately enunciated and examined. The appetitive part of the mind (*psychê*) is described. Then, having placed his finger on the particular intellectual function which has most to do with determining moral conduct, Aristotle endeavours to explain how it works in practice. He leaves out of view all the emotions, feelings, and intellectual powers which in theory do not directly contribute to the result, and looks at man for the purpose of ethical inquiry, as if he were constituted solely of special kinds of reason called practical intuition and

prudence and of certain selected impulses called desire.⁹⁸

The result of this procedure is not satisfactory. The analysis of the rational part of the mind, conducted on Platonic lines, leads to prudence being fixed on as the intellectual faculty chiefly operative in conduct. Prudence is found to be a faculty of means only. Conduct, we are told, is a habit produced by a repetition of deliberately selected acts; the process of deliberate selection involving an irrational impulse to act, accompanied by rational processes pointing out the objects towards which action should be directed, and good conduct requires that both the irrational impulse shall be "right" and the rational process "true."⁹⁹

But how is the rightness of the one and the truth of the other to be ascertained? Obviously only by considering the end to which they are severally directed, for the final cause is in every case the determinant. But we are nowhere told in this book in clear and unambiguous language what fixes this end, or, as it is sometimes called, "point of view" (σκοπός). Various statements are made, but they are not consistent, and often not intelligible. In one place prudence itself is indicated as the faculty which points to the end.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸ ἡ ὀρεκτικὸς νοῦς ἡ προαίρεσις ἡ ὀρεξις διανοητική, καὶ ἡ τοιαύτη ἀρχὴ ἀνθρώπου. 1139, b 4.

⁹⁹ διὸ οὐτ' ἀνευ νοῦ καὶ διανοίας οὐτ' ἀνευ ἠθικῆς ἐστὶν ἕξεως ἡ προαίρεσις. 1139, a 33. ἡ γὰρ προαίρεσις μετὰ λόγου καὶ διανοίας. 1112, a 15.

¹⁰⁰ καὶ γὰρ νῦν πάντες, ὅταν ὀρίζωνται τὴν ἀρετὴν, προστιθέασιν, τὴν ἕξιν εἰπόντες καὶ πρὸς ἃ ἐστὶ, τὴν κατὰ τὸν ὀρθὸν λόγον. ὁ ρ θ δ ε δ' ὁ κατὰ τὴν φρόνησιν. 1144, b 22.

Elsewhere we are told that good character makes the point of view right whilst prudence assigns the means,¹⁰¹ which is as much as to say that virtue determines what acts are virtuous. In a third place we are referred, not to good character, but to a predisposition to good character—to “natural virtue”—as fixing or at all events helping to fix the end.¹⁰² This confusion arises from explaining conduct by analysing and defining its constituents, or what are assumed to be such, instead of looking at the actual living persons by whose actions conduct is shown; looking at the separate parts of the instrument instead of observing the instrument in operation. Now in the earlier books of the *Ethics* this mistake is avoided. We are there referred, not to prudence but to the prudent man;¹⁰³ things just and temperate are said to be such things as a just and temperate man would do, a personal standard and not an instrument fabricated in the workshop of thought is taken as the measure and test of conduct.

Aristotle's remarks on natural virtue in Chapter 13 are interesting because, had he pursued that line of inquiry, he might have arrived at a theory of conduct which would have embraced, not merely the Greek world but mankind in general, together with all sentient beings as well. “Each of our moral qualities,” we read in the chapter just referred to, “are in a sense nature's gift; we are just and brave and temperate as soon as we are born, and these habits and dispositions

¹⁰¹ ἡ μὲν γὰρ ἀρετὴ τὸν σκόπον ποιεῖ ὁρῶν, ἡ δὲ φρόνησις τὰ πρὸς τοῦτον. 1144, a 7.

¹⁰² οὐκ οἶόν τε ἀγαθὸν εἶναι κυρίως ἄνευ φρονήσεως, οὐδὲ φρόνιμον ἄνευ τῆς ἠθικῆς ἀρετῆς. 1144, b 31.

¹⁰³ 1107, a 1.

are found in the lower animals as well as in ourselves." ¹⁰⁴

Holding these wide and scientific views of the natural development of moral characteristics, and believing also that nature, who always tries for the best, although she does not always succeed, has given to every plant and every animal the constant desire to produce "another like itself," ¹⁰⁵ Aristotle might easily and legitimately have concluded that acts which tend to the preservation of the species, and enable its members to do their special work well, are universally good. He does not,

¹⁰⁴ 1144, b 4. See Hist. Animal. 8. 1. 588, a 17, pp. 27, 96 *ante*. The passage is important enough to be repeated. "The life and conduct of living beings differ as their habits and food differ. In most, even of the lower animals, traces of the mental and moral characteristics which distinguish man may be found; they are savage and good-tempered, brave and cowardly, and some of these qualities are possessed by them in greater, and some in less measure than by mankind; in other cases the likeness is one of analogy; man has art and wisdom, and animals have a natural capacity something like these. The analogy is most plainly seen in children, where we may observe the traces and seeds of future habits, and in truth the vital principle in man differs scarcely at all at that age from the vital principle in the lower animals, so that no wonder that some human characteristics are the same, others similar, and others corresponding to those we see in animals. For nature proceeds from things inanimate to living beings by gradations so slight and continuous that we cannot see where the boundary lies."

¹⁰⁵ γεννᾶν ἕτερον οἶον αὐτό· τοῦτο γὰρ παντὸς φύσει τελείου ἔργον καὶ ζῴου καὶ φυτοῦ. De Gener. ii. 735, a 18.

however, draw that conclusion, and so far as the Ethics are concerned he relies on the consensus of opinion in a given society as expressed in praise and blame, with an ultimate reference in the case of doubt to the opinion of a selected person—"the prudent man," to determine the end of conduct.

On the whole it cannot be said that the sixth book fulfils its announced purpose of informing us how to arrive at the precise point in the mean at which we ought to aim. That question is answered, so far as it is answered at all, in the second book, by a reference, not to prudence, but to the prudent man. If, however, we turn to Plato's Protagoras we find a clear and explicit answer to the question. It is "the science and art of measurement," we are told, "which determines the choice, on the correctness of which our whole happiness in life depends."¹⁰⁶ We call things good which procure either pleasure or a surplus of pleasure over pain: we call things bad which give pain or a surplus of pain over pleasure; there is no other standard by which we regulate our conduct than this,"¹⁰⁷ and as it is assumed to be incredible that any one would knowingly and deliberately take a lesser good in preference to a greater, the intellectual faculty called by Plato in the

¹⁰⁶ ἐπειδὴ δὲ ἡδονῆς τε καὶ λυπῆς ἐν ὁρᾷ τῇ αἰρέσει ἐφάνη ἡμῖν ἡ σωτηρία τοῦ βίου οὕσα—ἄρα πρῶτον μὲν οὐ μετρητικὴ φαίνεται, ὑπερβολῆς τε καὶ ἐνδείας οὕσα καὶ ἰσότητος πρὸς ἀλλήλας σκέψις; ἀλλ' ἀναγκή. Ἐπει δὲ μετρητικὴ, ἀνάγκη δήπου τέχνη καὶ ἐπίστημη. Plato, Protag. 357 A-B.

¹⁰⁷ ταῦτα δὲ ἀγαθὰ ἐστὶ δι' ἄλλο τι ἢ ὅτι εἰς ἡδονὰς ἀποτελευτᾷ καὶ λυπῶν ἀπαλλαγὰς τε καὶ ἀποτροπὰς; ἢ ἔχειτέ τι ἄλλο τέλος λέγειν, εἰς ὃ ἀποβλέψαντες αὐτὰ ἀγαθὰ καλεῖτε, ἀλλ' ἢ ἡδονὰς τε καὶ λύπας; οὐκ ἂν φαῖεν, ὥς ἐγῶμαι. Plato, Protag. 354 B-C.

Protagoras the "science of mensuration," which is the instrument by which alone we can precisely ascertain on which side the balance of pleasure and pain lies, is the real arbiter of conduct and supplies the test by which in any given case we can know whether what we are doing will result in a preponderance of pleasure or of pain, in other words, of good or ill. People who go wrong do so, we are told, because they are ignorant of this saviour art of mensuration; a teachable knowledge therefore determines the end of conduct. This is a clear and intelligible statement by the Platonic Sokrates identifying virtue with knowledge.¹⁰⁸

That good conduct is to a great extent the result of knowledge and bad conduct the result of ignorance is undeniably true: some of the limitations of this doctrine will be considered in the succeeding book. Here it is only necessary to say that Aristotle's observation that Sokrates thought all the virtues to be science,¹⁰⁹ and the statement in the Eudemian Ethics that he thought that it was the same thing to know what justice is and to be just,¹¹⁰ are fully warranted.

The sixth book contains more than its share of difficulties and inconsistencies. It opens by saying that it is necessary to define the rational faculty by which we perceive "the limit of the mean" or true point of action.¹¹¹ But when we come to the description of pru-

¹⁰⁸ εἰ μὲν γὰρ ἄλλο τι ἦν ἢ ἐπιστήμη ἡ ἀρετή, ὥσπερ Πρωταγόρας ἐπιχείρει λέγειν, σαφῶς οὐκ ἂν ἦν διδακτόν· νῦν δὲ εἰ φανήσεται ἐπιστήμη ὅλον, ὥς σὺ σπεύδεις, ὦ Σώκρατες, θαυμάσιον ἔσται μὴ διδακτόν ὄν. Plato, Protag. 361 B.

¹⁰⁹ 1144, b 29.

¹¹⁰ Eud. Eth. 1216, b 7.

¹¹¹ δεῖ καὶ περὶ τὰς τῆς ψυχῆς ἕξεις μὴ μόνον ἀληθῶς εἶναι

dence, the faculty in question, we find that it tells us not what to do but how to do it. We expect to hear of a kind of reason which will answer practical questions, such as "How often should I forgive my brother? Seven, ten, or how many times?" and we learn in effect that we should take time and consider how best to negotiate the matter, whether to write, or call or send a friend to pave the way for a reconciliation. This is useful and doubtless prudent, but it is not the kind of answer the reader was led to expect.

The distinction between art and prudence is obscured by the statement that although there may be good and bad art, there cannot be good and bad prudence.¹¹² Bad art is not art at all, but the negation of it (*ἀτεχνία*);¹¹³ art is defined in terms which exclude bad art with precisely the same stringency as the definition of prudence excludes imprudence.¹¹⁴

Then, the account of prudence leaves unsolved the question asked in the twelfth chapter, "What is the use of prudence if it is the faculty concerned with things good for man, and if these are the very things which a good man does?" The question, already asked in the fourth chapter of the second book, is more important than Aristotle seems disposed to admit, and it is not answered by referring to the difference between conduct and art,¹¹⁵ or by saying that virtue places the mark aright and that prudence shows how to aim

τοῦτ' εἰρημένον, ἀλλὰ καὶ διωρισμένον τίς ἐστιν ὁ ὀρθὸς λόγος καὶ τοῦτον τίς ὁρος. 1138, b 32.

¹¹² ἀλλὰ μὴν τέχνης μὲν ἔστιν ἀρετή, φρονήσεως δ' οὐκ ἔστιν. 1140, b 21.

¹¹³ 1140, a 21.

¹¹⁴ 1140, a 20; 1140, b 20.

¹¹⁵ 1105, a 21.

at it.¹¹⁶ Still less is the difficulty removed by the observation that prudence is valuable as being the distinctive virtue of the deliberative side of mind, even if it does nothing.¹¹⁷ A faculty which is inoperative cannot, on Aristotelian principles, be a virtue in a real sense. What is said in Chapter 13 on cleverness increases the original difficulty. We there learn that cleverness enables us to do the things which tend towards a given object, and that, assuming the object to be good, it is a praiseworthy faculty.¹¹⁸ But this is exactly what prudence is and does; given a good end, it points out the means of attaining it. It is true that cleverness may be misapplied and that prudence may not, but this does not affect the question so far as prudence is concerned; on the subjects common to both there is no reason why cleverness should not take the place of prudence.

Then with regard to the end: it is good character (virtue) which is said to point it out,¹¹⁹ or as it is otherwise and better stated, it is the good man who is the rule and measure of rectitude.¹²⁰ If we ask how men are made good, we are referred to the creation of habit by public training inducing a character which feels pleasure and pain at right objects. Public training must, however, be initiated and directed by statesmen knowing the true end, and therefore *ex hypothesi* good. The production of good conduct thus assumes good conduct as

¹¹⁶ ἡ μὲν γὰρ ἀρετὴ τὸν σκοπὸν ποιεῖ ὀρθόν, ἡ δὲ φρόνησις τὰ πρὸς τοῦτον. 1144, a 7.

¹¹⁷ 1144, a 1.

¹¹⁸ 1144, a 23.

¹¹⁹ ἡ μὲν γὰρ ἀρετὴ τὸν σκοπὸν ποιεῖ ὀρθόν, ἡ δὲ φρόνησις τὰ πρὸς τοῦτον. 1144, a 7.

¹²⁰ 1113, a 29; 1176, a 15.

already existing in the teachers, for mere knowledge is not enough.¹²¹ The puzzle of how things come to exist presents itself elsewhere than in the Ethics and in many shapes. We might say that the more efficient members of society maintain themselves in competition with and at the expense of the less efficient, and that our notion of moral goodness is that of efficiency. But although Aristotle adopts the latter proposition,¹²² he is silent as to the former.

Bearing in mind the restricted office of prudence, we see on how slender a foundation the argument in favour of the so-called essential unity of the virtues rests. They are said to be united by the common attribute of prudence,¹²³ and it is true that the various kinds of good conduct imply an ability to devise means for arriving at their various ends, but this does not support the proposition that a man cannot be brave unless he be just, or liberal without being temperate.

Of the five modes by which the mind arrives at truth the faculty called intuition (*Noûs*) is the only one, except prudence itself, which has relation to conduct. By it the mind is brought into immediate contact with things. The modern word "intuition" expresses the mode of relation by the metaphor of sight; Aristotle explains it by that of touch.¹²⁴ It acts, as we are told in this book, in two directions: in one, apprehending the ultimate data of science—facts whose truth is perceived at once,

¹²¹ 1105, b 2; 1143, b 24.

¹²² 1106, a 15. See Plato, *Repub.* 353 B.

¹²³ ἅμα γὰρ τῇ φρονήσει μιᾷ οὕση πᾶσαι ὑπάρξουσιν. 1145, a 1.

¹²⁴ αὐτὸν δὲ νοεῖ ὁ νοῦς κατὰ μετάληψιν τοῦ νοητοῦ · νοητὸς γὰρ γίγνεται Σιγγάνων καὶ νοῶν, ὥστε τὰντὸν νοῦς καὶ νοητόν. *Met.* 11. 7. 1072, b 20.

as that two straight lines cannot enclose a space, or that A cannot be at once A and not A—in the other, taking cognisance of the individual objects of consciousness with which we have to deal in conduct; and in neither direction admitting of error. In the latter sense, and in that alone, is it relevant to ethical questions, and it is therefore surprising that what is said about it in the sixth chapter calls attention only to its use as an instrument of scientific truth.

In modern psychology intuition means any act of consciousness of which the immediate object is an individual presentment under the condition of distinct existence in space or time. Aristotle's use of the word differs from this only in not being so wide.

It is scarcely necessary to say that Aristotle does not imply by the use of the word *Noûs* what modern intuitional moralists assert, the existence of a special faculty capable of immediately deciding what ought to be done by a given person in given circumstances. What is called in modern systems "the moral faculty" does not exist for Aristotle as a single faculty; it is constituted of three separate parts—intuition which perceives an object, desire which moves us towards it, and prudence which points out how our desire may be realised consistently with correct ethical judgment.

CHAPTER VIII

Book VII.—Chapters 1–10.

IMPERFECT CONDUCT

SELF-CONTROL AND WANT OF SELF-CONTROL

Si possem, sanior essem,
Sed trahit invitam nova vis, aliudque cupido
Mens aliud suadet: video meliora proboque
Deteriora sequor.

Ovid. Met. vii. 18.

GOOD conduct has hitherto been described as conduct wholly good. The just, brave, temperate or liberal man has been defined as one who acts always "as he should" in the circumstances in which he is placed, this "should" being determined by him or for him by the faculty of prudence by whose opinion he is supposed invariably to abide; he is not only virtuous, but he does not desire to be anything else; his reason and inclinations are so harmoniously adjusted that there is no friction between them, and he takes the prudent course not merely because it is prudent but because he likes it.¹ Bad conduct is represented as the exact opposite of this, not a deviation from it, more or less, but its contrary in all respects. Where the reason of a good man says "Yes" that of a bad man says "No"; when the good man is convinced that he ought to go to the right, the bad man is convinced that he ought in similar circumstances to go to the left. He acts with full intention and has no regrets; vice gives him pleasure. These sharp antitheses, useful for the purpose of fixing a standard, are not usually

¹ οὐδ' ἐστὶν ἀγαθὸς ὁ μὴ χαίρων ταῖς καλαῖς πράξεσιν· οὔτε γὰρ δίκαιον οὐθεὶς ἂν εἴποι τὸν μὴ χαίροντα τῷ δικαιοπραγεῖν. 1099, a 17. σημεῖον δὲ δεῖ ποιεῖσθαι τῶν ἕξεων τὴν ἐπιγομένην ἡδονὴν ἢ λύπην τοῖς ἔργοις· ὁ μὲν γὰρ ἀπεχόμενος τῶν σωματικῶν ἡδονῶν καὶ αὐτῷ τούτῳ χαίρων σῶφρων, ὁ δ' ἀχθόμενος ἀκόλαστος. 1104, b 3.

realised in practice. They are model forms, convenient for exhibiting the shapes and colours of virtue and vice, but not like the figures which move in the world. They represent the best and perhaps not wholly unattainable standard of good conduct and the habit of deliberate wickedness. On one side of these lines there is an ideal or godlike virtue which transcends common experience; and on the other side there is a brutal vice which is beneath it—the result of an abnormally depraved nature like that of Phalaris, or of mutilation, disease or external circumstances so unfavourable as to force men below the ordinary level. Just as godlike virtue is rare, so brutal vice is rare, being chiefly met with in barbarous countries, the savages in the neighbourhood of the Black Sea having a particularly bad record.² These extremes, however, are not of practical importance, and Aristotle does little more than allude to them. Having in the preceding books described conduct as it should be within the limits imposed by human nature, he starts afresh in the seventh book by describing it as it commonly is—average conduct, worse than the best and better than the worst, and not strictly entitled to be called virtue.³ Conduct of this kind arises from the conflict already alluded to⁴ between man's reason and his unreasoning desires. For the rational and irrational parts of the soul—in a practical treatise like the *Ethics* Aristotle adopts the familiar Platonic expression “parts of the soul,” although in his own psychology he rejects it—are not so sharply divided but that they are able to react upon one another, and

² οἷς χαίρειν φασὶν ἐνίοις τῶν ἀπηγριωμένων περὶ τὸν Πόντον. 1148, b 21.

³ 1128, b 33. οὐκ ἔστι δ' οὐδ' ἡ ἐγκράτεια ἀρετή, ἀλλὰ τις μικτή.

⁴ 1102, b 16.

this gives rise to a phenomenon like the disease which manifests itself in a loss of power to co-ordinate the muscles into harmonious action, and which we should call motor ataxy, but which Aristotle calls paralysis.⁵ The bodily disease prevents voluntary motion from being properly effected, and the psychical state which corresponds to it produces a check or interference with the co-ordination of reason and appetency constituting good conduct. The man who overcomes this check by an exercise of will, Aristotle calls self-controlled or resolute; he has power over himself; he overbears the resistance which his passions offer to his reason; he does not like doing it, but he conquers his dislike. He differs, therefore, from the self-restrained man who has no bad desires and is so constituted as not to take any pleasure in acting against his better judgment; the self-controlled or resolute man feels the influence of the Siren pleasure but does not yield to her; he is a less perfect character than the self-restrained man, but more interesting and deserves more credit. Against him Aristotle sets the irresolute man, the man with no mastery over himself; in him the conflict between reason and inclination usually ends in favour of inclination; he sits on the hedge but generally comes down on the wrong side of it. How does this happen? Why does a man disobey his highest faculty? How is it that a man of sound judgment is not master of himself?⁶ The obvious answer is, because his feelings and inclinations carry him away.

But this answer requires explanation. It is not easy

⁵ ἀτεχνῶς γὰρ καθάπερ τὰ παραλελυμένα τοῦ σώματος μόρια εἰς τὰ δεξιὰ προαιρουμένων κινῆσαι τὸναντίον εἰς τὰ ἀριστερὰ παραφέρεται, καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς ψυχῆς οὕτως. 1102, b 18.

⁶ πῶς ὑπολαμβάνων ὁρθῶς ἀκρατεύεται τις. 1145, b 21.

to reconcile in theory with Aristotle's account of moral choice and his belief in the hegemony of reason. If man, regarded as an efficient cause of his own actions, is a compound of reason and desire, why should desire conquer reason instead of reason conquering desire? This is a psychological problem with which Aristotle was called upon to deal, and all the more because Sokrates had formally denied that any such conflict was possible. According to Sokrates, "if any one knows what is right and wrong, nothing can prevent him following the course which his knowledge prescribes; prudence is quite strong enough to help him,"⁷ and therefore if he errs it can only be from ignorance. This paradox led in a variety of questions; what did Sokrates mean by knowledge? Did he mean "Science" as then generally understood—knowledge of something which we cannot conceive to be otherwise than it is;⁸ or something less than this—belief, opinion, or even a strong suspicion? Then, if misconduct is due to ignorance, what is the nature of the ignorance? For it is a significant fact that ignorance does not come in until the feelings enter upon the scene.⁹ Aristotle examines the statement of Sokrates with care and acuteness. Nothing turns, he says, on the difference between exact knowledge and opinion, for some persons are as certain of what they think as others are of what they

⁷ *ἐάνπερ γιγνώσκη τις τὰγαθὰ καὶ τὰ κακά, μὴ ἂν κρατηθῆναι ὑπὸ μηδενός, ὥστε ἅλλ' ἅττα πράττειν ἢ ἃ ἂν ἐπιστήμη κελεύη, ἀλλ' ἱκανὴν εἶναι τὴν φρόνησιν βοηθεῖν τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ.* Plato, *Protag.* 352 C.

⁸ *πάντες γὰρ ὑπολαμβάνομεν, ὃ ἐπιστάμεθα, μὴ ἐνδέχεται ἄλλως ἔχειν.* 1139, b 19.

⁹ *ὅτι γὰρ οὐκ οἶεταί γε ὁ ἀκρατεύμενος πρὶν ἐν τῷ πάθει γενέσθαι, φανερόν.* 1145, b 29.

know.¹⁰ Take it that a man is persuaded, whether on good grounds or not, that he ought to do or not to do a certain thing, how are we to account for his acting contrary to what in the circumstances is his knowledge? Aristotle suggests several explanations. In the first place, he says, we must distinguish between the knowledge we possess and the knowledge we command. Much of what we are said to know is latent in the mind and must be searched for before it is found. We have it as the owner of a fishpond has fish which he cannot see and must catch before he can make use of; there is no difficulty in supposing a man to act against knowledge which is not available for use.¹¹

Then, there is another case in which we cannot command our knowledge, and may therefore be said not to have it; it is when our passions take such strong hold of us that we are like men mad or drunk; our reason is overpowered, and although we may talk rationally and even enunciate good maxims of morality, we do not realise what we say; this is very like the case put by Sokrates.

The real answer, however, is to be found by examining what most commonly takes place when a man acts against his better judgment. He does not, Aristotle maintains, traverse his judgment directly; he does not attack it in face; he turns it by a flanking movement. His reason tells him that A is B. He does not attempt to argue that A is not B; he says "True, but then X is Y, and I am going to act on the latter proposition." A sum of money is entrusted to a man to take care of;

¹⁰ ξνιοι γὰρ πιστεύουσιν οὐδὲν ἥττον οἷς δοξάζουσιν ἢ ἕτεροι οἷς ἐπίστανται. 1146, b 29.

¹¹ τοῦτο γὰρ δοκεῖ δεινόν, ἀλλ' οὐκ εἰ μὴ θεωρῶν. 1146, b 35. Cf. Plato, Theætet. 197 B sq.

presently he becomes pecuniarily embarrassed. He knows perfectly well that he has no right to apply the deposit to his own use nor does he attempt to argue with himself that he has; but he says, "There is no harm in borrowing; I will borrow this money and replace it." What determines him to act on the latter proposition instead of the former, is doubtless his need of money and his strong desire to have it, still he appears to act on a rational rule. The two maxims "You must not take that which does not belong to you" and "There is no harm in borrowing" are separately true, and as mere statements can stand together, although, as Aristotle justly remarks, "accidentally" they may prove to be inconsistent. "And so it happens," he continues, "that in a kind of way a man may do what is wrong under the guidance of reason."¹²

There is little doubt that this is what usually happens when a man is said to act against his better judgment. He can always find some reason, good, bad or indifferent, to justify what he wants to do.

There is yet another explanation. In the last case desire carried its point by tampering with the general rule; it often succeeds by attacking the particular case—the minor premiss of the syllogism of conduct. A man knows that sugar is unwholesome for him—he is forbidden to take it in any form. Grapes are on the table, and being fond of grapes, he says to himself, "Grapes are not sugar." Aristotle considers that in this instance, too, desire causes him either to overlook the fact that grapes contain sugar, or if he does not overlook it, to know it

¹² ὥστε συμβαίνει ὑπὸ λόγου πως καὶ δόξης ἀκρατεῦσθαι, οὐκ ἐναντίας δὲ καθ' αὐτήν, ἀλλὰ κατὰ συμβεβηκός—ἡ γὰρ ἐπιθυμία ἐναντία, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἡ δόξα—τῷ ὀρθῷ λόγῳ. 1147, a 35.

only in the imperfect way in which a drunken man knows what he is about.¹³

And this, he says, is a second solution of the difficulty which Sokrates tried to get over by denying the fact of acting against knowledge; the knowledge which is overborne by desire is frequently not that which Sokrates would have recognised as knowledge; not the concept of a general proposition, but only the consciousness of a particular presentation of sense, the minor premiss of one of those inferences which lead to conduct.

Aristotle's belief that moral action is always accompanied by a process of syllogistic inference may be right or wrong; it is wrong in the sense that we consciously go through such a process—but his explanation of misconduct, irrespective of the technical form in which it is presented, is undoubtedly correct. In all but a small minority of cases people err, not from want of knowledge, but because their desires cause them to act against such knowledge as they have. As he himself says, "With reference to conduct, knowledge has little or no power."¹⁴ The sophistry of passion takes many forms, and in all of them desire in some shape warps the judgment.

The phenomenon of irresolution or want of self-control is discussed by Aristotle in this book in one of its aspects only—that of the conflict of reason with the pleasures of bodily sense. He admits that other feelings followed by other pleasures may cause it also, but irresolution in these cases is considered by him to be used in a metaphorical or

¹³ ἔπει δ' ἡ τελευταία πρότασις δόξα τε αἰσθητοῦ καὶ κυρία τῶν πράξεων, ταύτην ἢ οὐκ ἔχει ἐν τῷ πάθει ὢν, ἢ οὕτως ἔχει ὥσπερ ὁ οἰνωμένος τὰ Ἐμπεδοκλέους. 1147, b 9.

¹⁴ πρὸς δὲ τὸ τὰς ἀρετὰς τὸ μὲν εἰδέναι οὐδὲν ἢ μικρὸν ἰσχύει. 1105, b 2.

analogical sense. Of the irresolution caused by the clash of inconsistent desires or the balancing of reasons against one another where no emotions are involved, he says practically nothing. And yet conflict of duties, of inclinations, and even of views purely intellectual, may create a barrier to action which requires as great an effort to overcome as the opposition of feeling and reason. Aristotle did not address himself to these points, because his immediate purpose was to deal with a Sokratic paradox which did not raise them. This consideration determines the place of the discussion—immediately after the explanation of the nature and function of practical reason and immediately before the chapters on pleasure; emotions in general being defined by Aristotle as psychical states followed by pleasure or pain.¹⁵

¹⁵ 1105, b 21.

TEXT

CHAPTER 1.—We will now start afresh by pointing out that things morally to be avoided take three shapes—vice, irresolution, and brutality. The opposite states to two of these are obvious, namely virtue and self-control; the most fitting opposite of brutality would perhaps be that superhuman and heroic virtue attributed by Homer to Hektor when he makes Priam say of him “that he seemed like the son, not of a mortal man, but of a God.” So that if, as is said, men become Gods by perfection of virtue, their perfection would be the true opposite of brutality. And just as godlike men are rare, so the brutal character is seldom met with, being chiefly found among barbarians and sometimes as the result of disease or maiming; and we are accustomed to mark excessive vice in mankind by applying to it this opprobrious name.¹⁶ This tendency will be alluded to later.¹⁷ Vice has been already spoken of—our present subject is want of self-control; feebleness and effeminacy on one hand, and resolution and steadfastness on the other—not that we are to assume these dispositions either to be the same as virtue and vice, or different in kind. What we should do here and elsewhere, is when we have

¹⁶ καὶ τοὺς διὰ κακίαν δὲ τῶν ἀνθρώπων ὑπερβάλλοντας οὕτως ἐπιδυσφημοῦμεν. 1145, a 32.

¹⁷ See Chapter 5.

stated the facts and gone through the preliminary of examining the difficulties, then to exhibit if we can all the views which command assent about these states, and if this be impossible, the greatest number and most important of such views, for if the difficulties are explained and a residuum of probable opinion left, the matter may be considered sufficiently proved.¹⁸

Now the qualities of self-control and steadfastness are generally regarded as good and praiseworthy, and want of self-control and feebleness as bad and blamable. The man who controls himself is thought to be the same as he who abides by reason, and he who cannot control himself to be one who does not; the latter does wrong knowingly under the influence of his passions; the former, knowing his desires to be wrong, does not yield to them on the ground of his reason. Then, some identify the self-restrained and the resolute or self-controlled man; some maintain the latter to be self-restrained in all things, while others deny this. Similarly the man of confirmed self-indulgence is by some thought to be indistinguishable from the man who is wanting in the power of self-control, while others insist upon a distinction. Like questions arise as to prudence—some denying that a prudent man can ever be irresolute, others saying that some prudent

¹⁸ δεῖ δ', ὥσπερ ἐπὶ τῶν ἄλλων, τιθέντας τὰ φαινόμενα καὶ πρῶτον διαπορήσαντας οὕτω δεικνύναι μάλιστα μὲν πάντα τὰ ἔνδοξα περὶ ταῦτα τὰ πάθη, εἰ δὲ μὴ, τὰ πλεῖστα καὶ κυρίωτατα· ἐὰν γὰρ λύηται τε τὰ δυσχερῆ καὶ καταλείπηται τὰ ἔνδοξα, δεδειγμένον ἂν εἴη ἱκανῶς. 1145, b 2. And see Topics i. 2. 101, a 34, where the use of the syllogism from ἔνδοξα in discussions of this kind is described—πρὸς δὲ τὰς κατὰ φιλοσοφίαν ἐπιστήμας [χρήσιμος ἢ πραγματεία] ὅτι δυνάμενοι πρὸς ἀμφοτέρω διαπορῆσαι ῥᾶον ἐν ἐκάστοις κατοψόμεθα τὰληθές τε καὶ τὸ ψεῦδος.

and clever men are irresolute.¹⁹ Again, men are said to be unable to command themselves in respect of anger, honour, and wealth. These are the assertions made.

CHAPTER 2.—Why does a man with right views fail to carry them out?²⁰ This is a question of difficulty. If his right views amount to knowledge, there are some who deny the possibility of his doing so. It would be strange, thought Sokrates, for knowledge to be overcome and dragged about like a slave,²¹ and for this reason he contended that such a thing as want of self-control did not exist: no one with right views, he said, will act contrary to that which is best in him; if he does, it can only be from ignorance.²² This statement is plainly contrary to fact, and it will be necessary to examine the affection in question and to consider, if ignorance be alleged as the cause of it, what is the nature of that ignorance; for it is obvious that the man who acts against his judgment does not think of doing so until he is under the influence of passion.²³

¹⁹ See Chapter 10 post.

²⁰ ἀπορήσειε δ' ἂν τις πῶς ὑπολαμβάνων ὁρξῶς ἀκρατεύεται τις. 1145, b 21.

²¹ δοκεῖ δὲ τοῖς πολλοῖς περὶ ἐπιστήμης τοιοῦτόν τι· οὐκ ἰσχυρὸν οὐδ' ἡγεμονικὸν οὐδ' ἀρχικὸν εἶναι . . . ἀλλ' ἐνούσης πολλάκις ἀνθρώπῳ ἐπιστήμης, οὐ τὴν ἐπιστήμην αὐτοῦ ἄρχειν ἀλλ' ἄλλο τι . . . ἀτεχνῶς διανοοῦμενοι περὶ τῆς ἐπιστήμης ὥσπερ περὶ ἀνδραπόδου, περιελκομένης ὑπὸ τῶν ἄλλων ἀπάντων. Plato, Protag. 352 B.

²² Σωκράτης μὲν γὰρ ὅλως ἐμάχετο πρὸς τὸν λόγον ὥς οὐκ οὔσης ἀκρασίας· οὐθένα γὰρ ὑπολαμβάνοντα πράττειν παρὰ τὸ βέλτιστον, ἀλλὰ δι' ἄγνοϊαν. 1145, b 25.

²³ ὅτι γὰρ οὐκ οἶεται γε ὁ ἀκρατεύομενος πρὶν ἐν τῷ πάθει γενέσθαι φανερόν. 1145, b 30.

Now there are some who make a partial concession to Sokrates; they agree that nothing can be more powerful than knowledge, but they deny the impossibility of anyone going against that which he has merely "opined" to be the better course,²⁴ and hence they consider that to be overcome by pleasure, although impossible in the case of a man with knowledge, is possible in the case of one who has an opinion only. But if it were merely a feeble judgment like opinion and not a strong one like knowledge which stood in the way, allowance would be made for failing to hold to it in the presence of powerful desires; but want of self-control is bad conduct, and we do not make allowances for bad conduct or for anything reprehensible. Is it, then, when prudence opposes that men yield? Scarcely so, for in that case the same man might be prudent and yet powerless to control himself, and you will hardly find a solitary disputant²⁵ who would contend that it is the character of the prudent man voluntarily to do what is extremely wrong. Again, if it is characteristic of self-control to have desires at once powerful and bad, self-control and self-restraint must be distinct, for it is no part of the latter character to have desires which are either too much or bad.²⁶ And yet this must follow on the above supposition, for if his desires were good the habit of resisting them would be bad, so that self-control would not in all cases be commendable; and if his desires were weak but not bad there would be nothing remarkable in resisting them, and if they were both

²⁴ παρὰ τὸ δόξαν βέλτιον. 1145, b 33.

²⁵ φήσκει δ' οὐδ' ἂν εἰς φρονίμου εἶναι τὸ πράττειν ἐκόντα τὰ φανλότατα. 1146, b 6. Plato, Gorgias. 472 B.

²⁶ οὔτε γὰρ τὸ ἄγαν σώφρονος οὔτε τὸ φαύλας ἔχειν. 1146, a 12.

weak and bad there would be no great merit in doing so.

Again, if self-control make a man hold to every opinion, to a false one for instance, it is bad; and if want of self-control makes men abandon any and every opinion it will be sometimes good, as in the case of Neoptolemos in Sophokles' *Philoktetès*, who rightly refused to abide by what Odysseus had persuaded him to do because he did not like to tell a lie.²⁷

Then there is the difficulty caused by the sophistical argument that a man may believe something really right to be wrong, and being unable to hold to his belief does the right thing, from which it follows that want of self-control when combined with folly becomes a virtue. Again, it is said that the man who gratifies his pleasures of set purpose is better than one who does so, not because he is convinced, but because he cannot control himself; the former may be cured because his convictions may be changed, but of the latter the proverb holds—"When water chokes, what must you drink after it?"²⁸ Lastly, if self-control and the want of it apply to all cases, who is the unqualified irresolute man? We do use these terms without qualification, but whom do we designate, for

²⁷ ΟΔ. τόλμα· δίκαιοι δ' αὖθις ἐκφανούμεθα.
νῦν δ' εἰς ἀνειδὲς ἡμέρας μέρος βραχύ
δός μοι σεαυτὸν, κᾶτα τὸν λοιπὸν χρόνον
κέκλησο πάντων εὐσεβέστατος βροτῶν.

NE. ἐγὼ μὲν οὐς ἂν τῶν λόγων ἀλγῶ κλύων,
Λαερτιῶν παῖ, τοῦσδε καὶ πράσσειν στυγῶ.
ἔφυν γὰρ οὐδὲν ἐκ τέχνης πράσσειν κακῆς.

Soph. *Philoc.* 82.

²⁸ εὐιατότερος γὰρ διὰ τὸ μεταπεισθῆναι ἂν. ὁ δ' ἀκρατὴς
ἔνοχος τῇ παροιμίᾳ ἐν ᾗ φαμὲν "ὅταν τὸ ὕδωρ πνίγη, τί δεῖ
ἐπιπίνειν;" 1146, a 34.

no one has the defects universally? These are the difficulties which meet us, and we must find an answer to some and leave others alone; to resolve a difficulty is to find a truth.²⁹

CHAPTER 3.—This chapter is not a model either of arrangement or of clearness, but it is important and its meaning can be made out. After stating in the first two paragraphs some preliminary questions which are subsequently dealt with, Aristotle proceeds formally to examine the opinion of Sokrates that a man cannot act against knowledge, and that when his conduct is foolish or wrong it is because he is ignorant. It makes no difference to the argument, he says, whether you call it “knowledge” or “true opinion”; in practice they come to the same thing, some people being as confident of what they think as others are of what they know.³⁰ Five arguments are brought forward against Sokrates. (1) The first is that a man may possess knowledge and not be in a position to use it; it may be latent in his mind and he might be able to find it if he had time, but he has not got it at his finger-ends. There is nothing remarkable in a man acting against knowledge which is not available.³¹ (2) The second argument is founded on the assumption that the knowledge of which we make use in conduct—practical knowledge—is arrived at by a process of inference in which the particular fact which is the immediate antecedent of action is related to a general term. “All things possessing specified attributes have specified effects.” That is a proposi-

²⁹ ἡ γὰρ λύσις τῆς ἀπορίας εὑρεσις ἐστίν. 1146, b 7.

³⁰ ἔνιοι γὰρ πιστεύουσιν οὐδὲν ἥττον οἷς δοξάζουσιν ἢ ἔτεροι οἷς ἐπίστανται. δηλοῖ δ' Ἡράκλειτος. 1146, b 29.

³¹ 1146, b 31 sqq. § 5. Plato, Theætet. 197 B.

tion which a man may know, but he may not know that the particular thing before him is one of the things of which the specified attributes are predicable. He is told that fish is wholesome; acting on this proposition he eats lobster, of which he happens to be fond, under the impression that it is fish. He does not act in accordance with the knowledge conveyed by the major premiss of the syllogism,—general propositions of this kind being in Sokrates' view the only true knowledge,—but this is not because he does not know the major premiss, but because he does not realise the minor.³² The above are two cases in which it is possible to act contrary to knowledge in the proper sense of the word—knowledge of a general or universal proposition. (3) But there is still another and a third case in which he may know and act against knowledge, that is, where passion and desire put him off his balance and affect him in body and mind to the extent of depriving him temporarily of his reason and in some cases of causing actual madness.³³ Irresolute people may be said to be in some such abnormal condition as this. (4) Fourthly, the matter may be regarded psychologically, with reference to the manner in which the reasoning which is the immediate antecedent of action is carried on. The general statement which serves as the major premiss of the syllogism of conduct is a maxim or rule; the minor premiss is a statement with regard to a particular fact of sense. With these two propositions before him the agent, unless prevented, acts at

³² ἔτι ἔπει δύο τρόποι τῶν προτάσεων, ἔχοντα μὲν ἀμφοτέρας οὐδὲν κωλύει πράττειν παρὰ τὴν ἐπιστήμην, χρώμενον μέντοι τῇ καθόλου ἀλλὰ μὴ τῇ κατὰ μέρος· πρακτὰ γὰρ τὰ καθ' ἕκαστα. 1146, a 35.

³³ 1147, a 10 sqq. § 7.

once.³⁴ Now if he happens to realise a rule of this kind forbidding him to act, and at the same time to realise another equally general rule which, although not contradictory of the former, would logically justify him in acting contrary to it, and if in these circumstances desire, the immediate cause of action, steps in and brings the fact of sense under the second rule instead of the first, then action in obedience to the second rule results.³⁵ Here is a case of rational conduct, not in terms, but in effect, opposed to a dictate of reason. The opposition is effected by the agency of desire which ranges the minor premiss under the wrong major; it is not owing to any contradiction between the two competing majors themselves.

Aristotle reverts in the two closing paragraphs of the chapter to his second point, that a man may be wrong by failing to realise the particular fact of sense which constitutes the minor premiss of the practical syllogism. He adds (5) as a fifth argument to what was there said "that the minor premiss is both an opinion on a fact of sense and also the opinion which is mainly operative in conduct,"³⁶ and that it is possible to have

34 ἔτι καὶ ὧδε φυσικῶς ἂν τις ἐπιβλέψει τὴν αἰτίαν. ἡ μὲν γὰρ καθόλου δόξα, ἡ δ' ἑτέρα περὶ τῶν καθ' ἕκαστά ἐστιν, ὧν αἰσθησις ἤδη κυρία· ὅταν δὲ μία γένηται ἐξ αὐτῶν, ἀνάγκη τὸ συμπερανθὲν ἔνθα μὲν φάναι τὴν ψυχὴν, ἐν δὲ ταῖς ποιητικαῖς πράττειν εὐθύς. . . . 1147, a 24, § 9.

35 ὅταν οὖν ἡ μὲν καθόλου ἐνῇ κωλύουσα γένεσθαι, ἡ δέ, ὅτι πᾶν γλυκὺ ἡδύ, τουτὶ δὲ γλυκύ (αὕτη δὲ ἐνεργεῖ) τύχη δ' ἐπιθυμία ἐνοῦσα, ἡ μὲν οὖν λέγει φεύγειν τοῦτο, ἡ δ' ἐπιθυμία ἄγει· κινεῖν γὰρ ἕκαστον δύναται τῶν μορίων. . . . 1147, a 31.

36 ἔπει δ' ἡ τελευταία πρότασις δόξα τε αἰσθητοῦ καὶ κυρία τῶν πράξεων. 1147, b 9 sqq. §§ 13, 14.

this opinion in the way in which, as explained already, a major premiss may be possessed by a man mad or drunk; farther that the minor premiss, inasmuch as it deals with a fact of sense and is therefore not general in form, is not entitled to be called "scientific," and that Sokrates' question may therefore be answered affirmatively; it may be said that want of self-control does not arise in the presence of true knowledge, nor is what Sokrates would call "science" dragged about like a slave—that indignity being reserved for the minor and inferior proposition which deals with the particular facts of sensible experience.

Five separate arguments are thus adduced against Sokrates; two of them (Nos. 1 and 3) deal with the major premiss of the syllogism of conduct, and are intended to show how a man may be said to know general rules without being able to avail himself of his knowledge; two others (Nos. 3 and 5) deal with the minor premiss, and point out that knowledge of the particular fact of sense may be latent in exactly the same way; the remaining argument (No. 4), which is the most important of all, explains the matter by showing how, when both the major and minor premisses are known, it is still possible for a man not to act on the inevitable inference because his desires set up another major premiss, true and valid in some cases but not applicable in the particular case, by which the desired action can be justified.

CHAPTER 4.—"We now come to a question asked at the beginning of the last chapter, but not then answered: 'What are the kinds of action to which the terms resolution and irresolution are strictly applicable?' Speaking quite generally, they must be actions pleasurable or painful. Now of the actions which produce pleasure some are necessary to life, whilst others are not necessary but optional—such as actions which lead to victory.

honour, wealth and other goods of the kind. We cannot call men who go beyond what they know to be reasonable in such matters irresolute—wanting in self-control, without adding the words ‘honour’ or ‘wealth,’ because it is only owing to a resemblance that the name is given to them; it is like the case of the man who won at Olympia and whose name was ‘Man’; the general definition of man applied to the victor in question, but he had also personal attributes which distinguished him.³⁷ When a man cannot restrain his indulgence in necessary pleasures—those depending on touch and taste, we call him wanting in self-control and blame him—not for having made a mistake, but for having committed a fault. This is shown by our calling such persons weak, a name not given to those who indulge too much in anger or honour. Hence resolute and self-restrained, and irresolute and incontinent men are classed together, because the same pleasures and pains affect them, widely as they differ in their attitudes to those pleasures; ³⁸ yielding to the desire of honour, wealth, or success, is a yielding to pleasures of a totally different kind. Reverting to the former distinction between pleasures and desires, some of which are in themselves good and noble, whilst others are ignoble and others again lie midway,³⁹ it is only excessive

³⁷ ὥσπερ Ἀνθρωπος ὁ τὰ Ὀλύμπια νικῶν· ἐκείνῳ γὰρ ὁ κοινὸς λόγος τοῦ ἰδίου μικρὸν διάφερον, ἀλλ’ ὅμως ἕτερος ἦν. 1147, b 35.

³⁸ οἱ δ’ εἰσὶ μὲν περὶ ταῦτά, ἀλλ’ οὐκ ὡσαύτως εἰσίν, ἀλλ’ οἱ μὲν προαιροῦνται, οἱ δ’ οὐ προαιροῦνται. 1148, a 16.

³⁹ 1148, a 22. Stahr thinks the difference was in the pronunciation of the name; “Sein Name war zwar von der allgemeinen begrifflichen Bezeichnung nur um ein Geringes verschieden.” (Ethik, p. 240).

indulgence in good and intermediate pleasures which is blamed, and then not blamed as a vice, although of course excesses are to be avoided, but want of self-control with regard to the pleasures of sense stands on a different footing; it is not only to be avoided, it is blamed as wrong.⁴⁰ When we call a man a bad doctor or a bad actor we do not impute vice;—we use the word ‘bad’ in a metaphorical or analogical sense, and this shows that there is a real distinction between the two cases, and that in the latter we should always qualify the word ‘want of control’ by adding ‘in honour’ or ‘in anger,’ or as the case may be.”

CHAPTER 5.—“Some things⁴¹ are naturally pleasant, and of these some are so without qualification and others are so only to certain races of men and animals. There are other pleasures not natural, but arising either from a maimed or diseased body or from a vicious nature; pleasures so arising develope habits which may be called brutal. Instances of this are found in the case of the woman who was said to have eaten infants, or in the things that are reported of the savage races living near the Euxine Sea, cannibalism and feasting on one another’s children, or the alleged excesses of Phalaris. Such things are brutal, the result of mental or bodily disease, of habit or natural defect. To those for which nature is responsible no one would apply the term ‘want of self-control,’ nor to those resulting from a diseased habit; they are outside the limits of vice, just as brutality

⁴⁰ ἡ γὰρ ἀκρασία οὐ μόνον φευκτὸν ἀλλὰ καὶ τῶν ψεκτῶν ἐστίν· 1148, b 5.

⁴¹ Chapter 5 is a continuation of the subject treated in Chapter 4, and, like that chapter, deals with the question asked in 1146, b 3, τίς ὁ ἀπλῶς ἀκρατής;

is, and for a man to restrain himself or not to restrain himself with regard to them is not self-control or the want of it, but requires some qualifying addition, as in the case of honour and anger.⁴²

All abnormal cases of folly, cowardice, cruelty or want of restraint, may be considered as due either to brutality or to disease; for example, a man who is so constituted as to fear everything, even the noise of a mouse, has the cowardice of an animal; the man who was terrified at a cat was so because of constitutional disease; people of naturally defective intelligence again, who live like animals by their senses alone,⁴³ as some tribes of remote barbarians do, are like brutes; those who are mad or epileptic are the same. In some of such cases it is possible for a man to restrain himself, as if Phalaris were to refrain from some act of extraordinary cruelty or vice, and it is possible also to yield to the desire. We have therefore to distinguish human vice from other cases by using the word 'vice' simply, and adding the words 'brutish' or 'diseased' to the other instances. It has now been sufficiently shown that self-control and the want of it refer, strictly speaking, only to the cases to which self-restraint and unrestrained indulgence apply, and that outside these limits it is only by metaphor that the terms can be applied."

CHAPTER 6.—"We will now consider the point that not to restrain your anger is not so bad as not to restrain

⁴² τὸν δ' ἔχοντα κρατεῖν ἢ κρατεῖσθαι οὐκ ἡ ἀπλῇ ἀκρασία ἀλλ' ἡ καθ' ὁμοιότητα, καθάπερ καὶ τὸν περὶ τοὺς θυμὸς ἔχοντα τοῦτον τὸν τρόπον τοῦ πάθους, ἀκρατῇ δ' οὐ λεκτέον 1149, a 1.

⁴³ οἱ μὲν ἐκ φύσεως ἀλόγιστοι καὶ μόνον τῇ αἰσθήσει ζῶντες θηριώδεις. 1149, a 9.

your desires. It looks as if anger heard reason partially but mistook it, like hasty servants who rush off to execute an order before they have heard it out and blunder in consequence,⁴⁴ or like dogs who bark when any one makes a noise without waiting to see whether he be friend or foe; anger is just such a case, for owing to natural heat and quickness the angry man, not hearing all that reason has to say, rushes at once to avenge himself. Reason or imagination suggest an insult or a slight; anger drawing the inference that slights and insults are not to be endured, flares up at once. But desire proceeds to gratify itself on the mere suggestion of pleasure. Anger therefore follows reason in a way, but desire does not, and is consequently worse.

“Again, we are more indulgent to those who follow natural appetites, and we also excuse desires common to every one, and in proportion as they are so; now anger and harshness of disposition are more natural than the desires which run into excess without being necessary,⁴⁵ and excuses are therefore made for them; witness the excuse which a man made for himself for striking his father: ‘My father,’ he said, ‘struck his father, and my son (pointing to him) will strike me when he grows to be a man, for it runs in our family.’ So the man who was dragged by his son and bid him stop at the house door, gave as a reason that he had dragged his own father so far. Again, the more people

⁴⁴ ἔοικε γὰρ ὁ θυμὸς ἀκούειν μὲν τι τοῦ λόγου, παρακούειν δέ, καθάπερ οἱ ταχεῖς τῶν διακόνων, οἳ πρὶν ἀκοῦσαι πᾶν τὸ λεγόμενον ἐκθέουσιν, εἶτα ἁμαρτάνουσι τῆς προστάξεως. 1149, a 25.

⁴⁵ ὁ δὲ θυμὸς φυσικώτερον καὶ ἢ χαλεπότης τῶν ἐπιθυμιῶν τῶν τῆς ὑπερβολῆς καὶ τῶν μὴ ἀναγκαίων. 1149, b 6.

secretly contrive the worse they are;⁴⁶ the man who gives way to anger is neither secret nor a contriver, but those under the influence of desire are both. Hence the name of Aphroditê—‘the wily Cyprian,’ and Homer alludes to her embroidered girdle and to ‘woman’s wheedling ways which steal away the sense even of close thinkers.’⁴⁷ So that this kind of indulgence is lower and worse than indulgence in anger; it is self-indulgence without any qualification and a kind of vice.

“Again, the feeling which causes one to insult another is accompanied by pleasure, but every angry man acts from pain. If, then, the things it is most right to be angry about are the more unjustifiable things, not to control desire is worse than not to control anger, for the pleasure of insult has no place in anger.⁴⁸

“A distinction must be drawn between the desires classed above as due to the bodily pleasures; some are natural and human, whilst others are brutish or due to disease. It is only to natural and human desires that the terms ‘temperance’ and ‘self-indulgence’ are applied; we do not call the brute creation either temperate or self-indulgent, except by a figure of speech, as when any kind of animal differs from another in wantonness or voracity,⁴⁹ for brutes are

⁴⁶ ἔτι ἀδικώτεροι οἱ ἐπιβουλότεροι. 1149, b 13.

⁴⁷ Ἦ, καὶ ἀπὸ στήθεσφιν ἐλύσατο κεστὸν ἱμάντα
 ποικίλον, ἔνθα τέ οἱ θελκτήρια πάντα τέτυκτο·
 ἔνθ' ἐνι μὲν φιλότης, ἐν δ' ἡμερος, ἐν δ' ὀαριστὺς
 πάρφασις, ἥ τ' ἔκλεψε νόον πύκα περ φρονεόντων.
 II. 14. 214.

⁴⁸ εἰ οὖν οἷς ὀργίζεσθαι μάλιστα δίκαιον, ταῦτα ἀδικώτερα. 1149, b 20.

⁴⁹ καὶ εἴ τιτι ὅλως ἄλλο πρὸς ἄλλο διαφέρει γένος τῶν ζώων
 ὕβρει καὶ σιναμωρίᾳ καὶ τῷ παμφάγον εἶναι. 1149, b 32.

incapable of moral choice and of reasoning on their acts, and, like madmen, have no self-command.⁵⁰

“The bad disposition of a brute is not so morally bad as vice, but is more dangerous; the better part of the nature is not destroyed as in mankind; it does not exist. You might as well compare a lifeless object with a living thing and ask which is the worse; the badness of a thing which has no principle of action is always less mischievous than that of a thing that has; it would be much the same as comparing injustice with an unjust man; each in a way is worse. But a man can do a thousand times more harm than a brute.”

CHAPTER 7.—A chapter mainly devoted to bringing out the meaning of the words employed in the course of the previous discussion and placing them in their relation to pleasure and pain. But there is some repetition of what has been already said, and the distinctions are here and there too fine drawn. Aristotle begins by stating, what is undeniably true, that “both with regard to pleasure and pain some people are weaker and others are stronger than the average; the man who shows more than the average power of resisting the allurements of bodily pleasures has been called the resolute or self-controlled man, whilst the one who has less than the average power in the same case is called irresolute, wanting in self-control, one who cannot keep himself in hand. There is a corresponding distinction in the power of bearing pain; those on the weak side being called ‘soft’ and those on the strong side ‘enduring.’ Ordinary conduct lies

⁵⁰ ἐξέστηκε τῆς φύσεως, ὥσπερ οἱ μαινόμενοι τῶν ἀνθρώπων.. 1149, b 35. Das Thier ist “nicht bei sich.” Stahr. But see p. 376.

between these extremes, with a tendency to the bad side.⁵¹

“Irresolution and self-command, and softness and endurance, stand, therefore, respectively opposed; the two former to pleasures, the two latter to pains. Apart from the fact that endurance and self-command differ in respect of the subjects to which they are related, there is a further difference between them which fixes their position in the scale of good conduct. Self-command overcomes; endurance is only not worsted; and as it is a different and better thing to win a victory than not to suffer a defeat, self-command is to be preferred to endurance.”⁵²

Some characteristic examples of effeminacy and want of self-control are given by Aristotle: he describes the man who saunters languidly along trailing his cloak behind him as though he had not strength to carry it properly, “and who does not know what a poor creature he is for imitating an invalid”;⁵³ he mentions as an instance of want of self-control one Xenophantus, who while trying to restrain his laughter burst into a loud guffaw. These anecdotes illustrate the want of self-control on its two sides; for it has a weak side as well as a strong side,⁵⁴ being due sometime to the overmaster-

⁵¹ μεταξὺ δ' ἡ τῶν πλείστων ἕξις, καὶν εἰ ῥέπουσι μᾶλλον πρὸς τὰς χεῖρους. 1150, a 15.

⁵² τὸ μὲν γὰρ καρτερεῖν ἐστὶν ἐν τῷ ἀντέχειν, ἡ δ' ἐγκράτεια ἐν τῷ κρατεῖν, ἕτερον δὲ τὸ ἀντέχειν καὶ κρατεῖν, ὥσπερ καὶ τὸ μὴ ἡττᾶσθαι τοῦ νικᾶν · διὸ καὶ αἰρετώτερον ἐγκράτεια καρτερίας ἐστίν. 1150, a 33.

⁵³ ὅς ἔλκει τὸ ἱμάτιον, ἵνα μὴ πονήσῃ τὴν ἀπὸ τοῦ αἶρειν λύπην, καὶ μιμούμενος τὸν κάμνοντα οὐκ οἶεται ἄθλιος εἶναι, ἀθλίῳ ὁμοίος ὢν. 1150, b 3.

⁵⁴ ἀκρασίας δὲ τὸ μὲν προπέτεια τὸ δ' ἀσθένεια. 1150, b 19.

ing influence of powerful emotion, when you try not to do a thing and yet cannot help doing it (as in Xenophantus' case), and sometimes to mere want of power or to being taken unawares, when even a trifling cause may make you lose your balance. Aristotle exemplifies this latter by saying that if you prepare yourself beforehand you can prevent yielding to the sensation of tickling.⁵⁵ Persons of impetuous disposition or atrabilious temperament are most liable to the strong form of want of self-control."⁵⁶

CHAPTER 8.—“Both the two kinds of want of self-control just distinguished agree in this, that those who yield to them regret having done so, and they are for this reason sharply distinguished from unrestrained indulgence properly so called, where regret finds no place; the former are acute attacks like an epileptic seizure, the latter is a chronic malady like dropsy or consumption.⁵⁷ And as disease is less amenable to treatment in the chronic than in the acute stage, we can answer the doubt raised in the second chapter⁵⁸ by saying that unrestrained self-indulgence is worse than want of self-control because it is less easily curbable.

“And for the same reason the strong form of want of self-control is better than the weak form; those who

⁵⁵ ἔνιοι γὰρ, ὥσπερ προγαργαλίσαντες οὐ γαργαλίζονται, οὕτω καὶ προαισθόμενοι—οὐκ ἡπτῶνται ὑπὸ τοῦ πάθους. 1150, b 22.

⁵⁶ μάλιστα δ' οἱ ὀξεῖς καὶ μελαγχολικοὶ τὴν προπετῇ ἀκρασίαν εἰσὶν ἀκρατεῖς. 1150, b 25.

⁵⁷ ζοικε γὰρ ἡ μὲν μοχθηρία τῶν νοσημάτων οἷον ὑδέρῳ καὶ φθίσει, ἡ δ' ἀκρασία τοῖς ἐπιληπτικοῖς ἡ μὲν γὰρ συνεχῆς ἡ δ' οὐ συνεχῆς πονηρία. 1150, b 32.

⁵⁸ 1146, a 31.

are thrown off their balance by a sudden attack of passion are more likely to recover themselves than those who have no balance to recover, but drift back from mere feebleness into wrong courses; weak people are overcome by slight temptations, just as some men become intoxicated with a glass of wine.

"From this it appears that want of self-control is not vice, although it may perhaps be called a modified form of it; vice proceeds deliberately, want of self-control does not; nevertheless it comes to the same thing in the end; as Demodocus said of the Milesians, 'they are not fools, but they act as if they were.'⁵⁹

"The important matter, however, is a man's disposition and not his actions. The difference between virtue and vice is that one preserves a true principle of action and the other destroys it. In morals the principle which determines right and wrong is given by the end which you assume and not by any process of reasoning, just as in mathematics it is the indemonstrable assumptions on which the correctness of the whole process depends.⁶⁰

"In like manner the principles of conduct are not given

⁵⁹ ὥσπερ τὸ Δημοδόκου εἰς Μιλησίους "Μιλήσιοι ἀξύνετοι μὲν οὐκ εἰσίν, δρῶσι δ' οἷάπερ ἀξύνετοι. 1151, a 8.

⁶⁰ ἐν δὲ ταῖς πράξεσι τὸ οὐ ἔνεκα ἀρχή, ὥσπερ ἐν τοῖς μαθηματικοῖς αἱ ὑποθέσεις· οὔτε δὲ ἐκεῖ ὁ λόγος διδασκαλικὸς τῶν ἀρχῶν οὔτε ἐνταῦθα, ἀλλ' ἀρετὴ ἢ φυσικὴ ἢ ἐθιστὴ τοῦ ὁρδοδοξεῖν περὶ τὴν ἀρχήν. 1151, a 16. A play on ἀρχή; "You cannot prove your principles any more in conduct than in mathematics. In mathematics you start with unprovable hypotheses; in conduct you start with the end, and that end is arrived at not by reason but by natural good disposition or by habituation, which makes you think rightly about the end. The end is the beginning." Post. Anal. i. 2. 72, a 20.

by reason, but by habituation or by natural disposition, and the man who acts on true principles so given is self-restrained, and he who deliberately rejects such principles is incorrigible.

“A man deficient in self-control is therefore to be distinguished from one who makes no effort to restrain himself in this, that although he violates true principles of conduct he does so under the influence of desire, and not because he is persuaded that he is right in abandoning himself to the pleasures of sense. He cannot be called altogether bad, because his better self still remains.”⁶¹

CHAPTER 9.—“One of the questions formerly raised was whether the quality of self-control was properly attributable to a man who resolutely maintains any opinion good or bad,⁶² or whether it should be limited to resolution in a right opinion; so of the quality of irresolution; is it confined to one who fails to hold true opinion or not? The essential quality of resolution, replies Aristotle, is the maintenance of true opinion and correct choice, although accidentally a resolute man may hold opinions which are false. The terms ‘essential’ and ‘accidental’ are used with reference to the distinction between ultimate and proximate ends; the real end is the ultimate one, and it is this which fixes the character of the acts which lead up to it.”⁶³

⁶¹ σφύζεται γὰρ τὸ βέλτιστον, ἡ ἀρχή. 1151, a 25.

⁶² 1146, a 16.

⁶³ εἰ γάρ τις τοδὶ διὰ τοδὶ αἰρεῖται ἢ διώκει, καθ’ αὐτὸ μὲν τοῦτο διώκει καὶ αἰρεῖται, κατὰ συμβεβηλὸς δὲ τὸ πρότερον. 1151, a 35. Aristotle probably does not mean that a man is justified in stealing a loaf to prevent his child dying from starvation; but in saying that the object ultimately in view is so much more important than objects subsidiary

“Resolution, however, must be distinguished from that obstinacy which refuses to see any reason against the opinion which it takes up; to shut your eyes and decline to be convinced means that you are actuated by feeling and very often by pleasure; the resolute man will allow himself to be persuaded on a proper occasion, but his change of purpose is not due to his desires but to his reason. Men who are self-opinionated—the ignorant, the boorish—are all obstinate; they take pleasure in getting the better of others by not giving in, and are sorry when their views, like the unratified resolutions of a public meeting, have no effect;⁶⁴ being thus actuated by pleasure and pain, they resemble irresolute men. It is not always wrong to stick to your opinion; sometimes, like Neoptolemus in the *Philoktetês* of Sophoklês, you may give in from a proper reason, namely, the pleasure of speaking the truth and the wish to avoid the pain of telling a lie.”

Not every one, therefore, who acts on the impulse of pleasure is to be called incontinent or irresolute, but only he who yields to reprehensible pleasures.

“To apply the doctrine of the mean to the states we have been considering; we see that the resolute man stands midway between the extremes of being too much and too little under the influence of pleasure; the man on one side fails to hold his opinion because he is too much, and the man on the other because he is too

to it that errors in attaining the subsidiary objects are accidental, whilst errors in attaining ultimate objects are fundamental, he virtually concedes that the end justifies the means.

⁶⁴ χαίρουσι γὰρ νικῶντες ἐὰν μὴ μεταπίθωνται, καὶ λυποῦνται ἐὰν ἄκυρα τὰ αὐτῶν ἢ ὥσπερ ψηφίσματα. 1151, b 14.

little, amenable to such influences; the resolute man maintains his opinion, and does not change either for one reason or the other. Owing, however, to the rare occurrence of a disposition not amenable to pleasure, resolution seems to be the only contrary to irresolution, just as for a like reason incontinence or unrestrained self-indulgence seems the sole contrary to self-restraint. Both the self-restrained and the self-controlled man are alike in this, that on principle both are opposed to acting contrary to their conviction of what is right at the solicitation of pleasure; the point of difference is that one has, and the other has not, evil passions to contend with; the self-restrained man feels no pleasure in acting contrary to his reason; the self-controlled man feels pleasure indeed, but does not yield to it.”⁶⁵

CHAPTER 10.—“It follows from what has been said that the same man cannot be at once prudent and irresolute. Prudence implies moral goodness; it implies, not merely that a man knows what he ought to do, but that he does it; ⁶⁶ an irresolute man is neither good, nor does he act up to his beliefs. It is sometimes thought that a man may be at once irresolute and prudent, because it is recognised that he may be both irresolute and clever. But as has been shown in an earlier part of this treatise,⁶⁷ although cleverness is a necessary condition of prudence, the two qualities do not always coincide, for cleverness may be directed by a wrong choice to immoral ends. If

⁶⁵ ὁμοιοὶ δὲ καὶ ὁ ἀκρατὴς καὶ ἀκόλαστος, ἕτεροι μὲν ὄντες, ἀμφοτέροι δὲ τὰ σωματικὰ ἡδέα διώκουσιν, ἀλλ’ ὁ μὲν καὶ οἰόμενος δεῖν, ὁ δ’ οὐκ οἰόμενος. 1152, a 4.

⁶⁶ οὐ τῷ εἰδέναι μόνον φρόνιμος ἀλλὰ καὶ τῷ πρακτικός. 1152, a 8.

⁶⁷ 1144, a 23 sqq. See p. 366.

we look at the knowledge possessed by an irresolute man and compare it with the knowledge of a prudent man, the difference between the two is obvious; the latter has knowledge and uses it, the former does not. But when all is said, an irresolute man is only half bad, because although he acts voluntarily and goes wrong his intentions are good;⁶⁸ he may be compared to a state where the laws are all that can be desired but the citizens do not act up to them; a vicious man is like a state where the citizens obey the laws but the laws happen to be bad.⁶⁹ The strong form of irresolution—that in which resolve is mastered by violent passion (although perhaps in such a case a man can be hardly said to have resolved)—is more curable than the weak form where irresolution is due to want of power; so, too, irresolution which is the result of habit is more curable than irresolution produced by physical causes; it is easier to change one's habits than to change one's nature.

“So much for resolution and irresolution, steadfastness and feebleness.”

⁶⁸ ἡ γὰρ προαίρεσις ἐπιεικής· ὥσθ' ἡμιπόνηρος. 1152, a 17.

⁶⁹ καὶ ἔοικε δὴ ὁ ἀκρατὴς πόλει ἣ ψηφίζεται μὲν ἅπαντα τὰ δέοντα καὶ νόμους ἔχει σπουδαίους, χρήται δὲ οὐδέν—ὁ δὲ πονηρὸς χρωμένῃ μὲν τοῖς νόμοις, πονηροῖς δὲ χρωμένῃ. 1152, a 19.

REMARKS

THE interest of the discussion on irresolution or want of self-control lies, not in the answer given to the Sokratic paradox, but in the mode by which the answer is reached. It was not reserved for Aristotle to discover that it is in consequence of the disturbing action of passion and emotion that men act contrary to their better judgment ; his contribution consisted in analysing the process and in assigning to the various faculties, rational and irrational involved in it, their respective parts, and it required no little ingenuity to do this consistently with his own assumptions. For it was not open to him to question the principle on which Sokrates' argument rested. The supremacy of reason was acknowledged by Aristotle as fully as by Sokrates and Plato. It is true that reason, as Aristotle admitted, like any other faculty may be warped by disease or perverted by habitual misuse. But that is not the case under consideration. The problem of want of self-control, as stated, only arises when the action of reason is healthy and normal, when the agent, being under no exceptional disadvantages, recognises the obligation to act in one way and acts in another way. Aristotle having resolved conduct into a partnership between reason and desire was clearly called upon to show why the business was not carried on to the satisfaction of the predominant partner.

This obligation he undertakes, but properly to understand how he discharges it we must supplement what we

read in the *Ethics* by the fuller analyses and explanations contained in his other works.⁷⁰

The ultimate facts of mind are commonly reduced by modern psychologists to thoughts, feelings, and actions. Aristotle's analysis excluded feelings as a direct factor, but he arrived at much the same result by a different road. Life and mind as found in human beings is presented by him in ultimate analysis as thought and self-motion. Thought takes two forms; (*a*) theoretic, whose subject matter is things which are necessarily what they are; and (*b*) practical, dealing with things which may be in more ways than one. So far as conduct is concerned, (*a*) may be put out of account, for all conduct is a case of self-motion, and theoretic thought produces no movement whatever; thought which influences conduct is exclusively practical thought.⁷¹

As there can be no conduct without bodily movement, to inquire into the cause of conduct is to inquire into the cause of bodily movement. Its causes appear at first sight to be many: sensible perception, imagination, practical intelligence, wish, appetite, moral choice—any of these are capable of initiating a movement of the body, but they can all be reduced to the two which together constitute moral choice, namely practical intelligence (*νοῦς*) and desire (*ὀρεξις*).⁷² But on closer examination it

⁷⁰ De Anima iii. 9–10, 432, a 15–433, b 31; De Motu Animal. 6–7, 700, b 4–701, b 32.

⁷¹ *νοῦς ὁ ἕνεκά τινος λογιζόμενος καὶ ὁ πρακτικός.* De Anima iii. 10. 433, a 14. Practical thought is therefore not confined to man. De Anima ii. 3. 414, b 16.

⁷² *ἡ δὲ προαίρεσις κοινὸν διανοίας καὶ ὀρέξεως.* De Motu Animal. 700, b 23. *φαίνεται δὲ γε δύο ταῦτα κινεῖν, ἡ ὀρεξις ἡ νοῦς, εἴ τις φαντασίαν τιθεῖν ὡς νόησιν τινα.* De Anima iii. 10. 433, a 9.

appears that the immediate motive force is not mind in any form, but desire, or rather its object, and that mind can only be considered as contributing to bodily movement in that it presents to consciousness the objects which it is the impulse of desire to reach.⁷³ The desire or endeavour to reach an object is therefore the ultimate cause of animal motion. But what causes the desire? It is produced either by the immediate presentation of an individual object through one of the senses, in which case the object acts as a direct stimulus—its primary qualities being in fact brought into actual contact with the human body⁷⁴ through some intervening medium,—or by the mediate presentation of such an object by the faculty of imagination; this latter case, which may be called representation, involves mental intuition; we think of an object not actually present to sense but which has formerly been so and contemplate it as if it were actually present. Sense perception, therefore, either direct and immediate or indirect and mediate, is that which stimulates desire and calls it into activity. The object presented by the senses may be unassociated in experience with pleasure or pain, in which case it will leave us unmoved, or it may be associated in experience with pleasurable sensations, in which case desire when roused into activity by the presentation of the object causes the body to move towards it, or if associated with painful experiences to move from it.

⁷³ τὸ ὀρεκτικὸν γὰρ κινεῖ καὶ διὰ τοῦτο ἡ διάνοια κινεῖ ὅτι ἀρχὴ αὐτῆς ἐστὶ τὸ ὀρεκτικόν· καὶ ἡ φαντασία δὲ ὅταν κίνη οὐ κινεῖ ἄνευ ὀρέξεως· ἐν δὲ τί τὸ κινεῖ τὸ ὀρεκτόν. De Anima iii. 10. 433, a 18.

⁷⁴ ἅπαντα μὲν οὖν εἰσὶν αἱ διαφοραὶ τοῦ σώματος ἢ σώμα· λέγω δὲ διαφορὰς αἷ τὰ στοιχεῖα διορίζουσι, θερμὸν, ψυχρὸν ζηρὸν ὑγρὸν. De Anima ii. 11. 423, b 26.

Pleasure and pain therefore acting through the medium of sense perception cause motion towards something regarded as good and away from something regarded as bad.⁷⁵ Although the use of the word "desire" cannot be dispensed with, it is to be remembered that it extends as well to a motion of avoidance as to one of pursuit.⁷⁶

Why pleasure and pain are thus associated with objects desirable and good or undesirable and bad, so as to attract the animal organism to the one and repel it from the other, cannot be otherwise explained than by saying that it is part of nature's economy that it should be so—a contrivance, like many others for which she is responsible, doubtless designed for the best. It is parallel to that other arrangement by virtue of which healthy animal function is accompanied by pleasure, and imperfect or diseased function by pain. It is in any case difficult to see how animal life could have been long maintained unless the actions which tend to preserve it had been pleasurable and those which tend to destroy it painful.⁷⁷

This, then, is the theory of animal motion as we find it in Aristotle:

So far we have been considering individual objects

⁷⁵ ἔστι τὸ ἡδεσθαι καὶ λυπεῖσθαι τὸ ἐνεργεῖν τῇ αἰσθητικῇ μεσότητι πρὸς τὸ ἀγαθὸν ἢ κακόν, ἢ τοιαῦτα. De Anima iii. 7. 431, a 10.

⁷⁶ καὶ ἡ φυγὴ δὲ καὶ ἡ ὀρεξις τοῦτο ἡ κατ' ἐνέργειαν, καὶ οὐκ ἕτερον τὸ ὀρεκτικὸν καὶ φευκτικόν, οὐτ' ἀλλήλων οὔτε τοῦ αἰσθητικοῦ. De Anima iii. 7. 431, a 12.

⁷⁷ Plato had already identified the useful with the good and the harmful with the bad, κάλλιστα γὰρ δὴ τοῦτο καὶ λέγεται καὶ λελέξεται, ὅτι τὸ μὲν ὠφέλιμον καλὸν τὸ δὲ βλαβερόν αἰσχρόν. Plato, Repub. 5. 457 B.

of sense realised directly or indirectly in consciousness. With regard to such objects no propositions can be framed which are capable of furnishing a rule of conduct; all affirmations with regard to them must take the form, "This particular thing which I perceive affects me in this or that way; it is sweet, bitter, ugly, 'beautiful,' or as the case may be." Many animals, says Aristotle, never get beyond this; their impressions, like breath on the mirror, pass away immediately after they have been received, and not being remembered cannot be collected into an experience; such animals are incapable of rational conduct. But man possesses the power of retaining in his memory the impressions of sense; many such remembered impressions constitute an experience; when an experience rests in the mind, general propositions embodying it—"the one beyond the many"⁷⁸—can be framed and the basis of intelligent conduct as well as of art and science is laid. The power of doing this is the point of difference between rational and irrational animals. And by reason of this faculty every adult man comes to possess a variety of generalised rules or maxims, derived either from his own experience or from the transmitted experience of others, and which form his beliefs or the rational basis of his conduct. Those generalisations take the form, "All objects of a certain kind have such and such qualities; all acts of a certain kind have such and such results," and it is by selecting from his store of such maxims or general statements those that bear on the particular presentation or representation of sense that reasoned conduct becomes possible—the individual case is by that means related to the general rule. Aristotle thought that this relation always took in

⁷⁸ τὸ ἐν παρὰ τὰ πολλά. Post. Anal. ii. 19. 100, a 7.

practice the syllogistic form. Whether he was right in so thinking or not is immaterial to present purposes; it is at all events certain that when we think about conduct, when we proceed to justify or impeach it, we do so by reference to general propositions and particular cases, and that our reasoning is then thrown into the form of syllogism. Now why, when sense says "this particular thing is pleasant" and we are consequently moved to get it, and reason tells us that all objects of that kind are injurious, and we are consequently advised to avoid it, do we act on the impulse of sense rather than on the authority of reason? It is to be remembered that the question arises only with regard to those who admit the obligatory force of the general rule and who occasionally at least obey it; there are some who reject it together, but with them we are not concerned; they are not deficient in self-control, they are devoid of it.

Sokrates' bold statement that no one acts against his better judgment except through ignorance, although facts may be against it, is not easily answered by those who, like Aristotle himself, insist on the supremacy of reason and call it the ruling faculty. Aristotle escapes the difficulty by maintaining that when the ordinary man, the man not wholly vicious, finds himself in the presence of physical desire urging him to act and of reason forbidding him to act, he does obey reason but that he obeys another reason. He selects from his stock of general rules or maxims of conduct some one which fits his wishes and will justify his action without in terms contradicting the reason which stands in his way. He wants to drink wine, but he has been told that he ought not to take it. He bethinks himself, however, that wine is valuable as a stimulant; he remembers to have read somewhere that "a good sherris sack hath a twofold operation; it ascends me into the brain;

drives me there all the foolish and dull and crudy vapours which environ it; makes it apprehensive, quick, forgetive," and he has little difficulty in persuading himself that for some of these purposes it will be good for him. He can plead a kind of reason to justify his indulgence, one which is no real answer but which is sufficient for the purpose of self-debate.⁷⁹

The experience of most people will convince them that this is a true account of the mode in which they justify to themselves an action of which their better judgment disapproves. So far as we know, Aristotle was the first to formulate this explanation, and it is not the least valuable of his many contributions to moral philosophy. Unfortunately he has deprived his explanation of much of its value by insisting that the phenomenon of irresolution is, strictly speaking, limited to the cases to which the words self-restraint and confirmed self-indulgence apply. In this, as in other instances, he has done his theory an injustice by his desire to fall in with the usage of popular language. He tells us that we do not call those who act contrary to their reason with respect to pleasures unrelated to bodily needs, irresolute, and that therefore the words resolute and irresolute should not be used in any other case without qualifying words.⁸⁰ Just so, in popular English language people are called temperate and virtuous with reference to certain selected instances of virtue and temperance. But it is not the business of moral philosophers to help the public to spoil useful words by giving them a limited and accidental meaning.

⁷⁹ συμβαίνει ὑπὸ λόγου πῶς καὶ δόξης ἀκρατεύεσθαι, οὐκ ἐναντίας δὲ καθ' αὐτήν ἀλλὰ κατὰ συμβῆβεκός. 1147, a 35.

⁸⁰ προστιθέντες—ἀπλῶς δ' οὐ. 1147, b 33.

Any emotions which are followed by pleasure and pain may, on Aristotle's own showing, disturb the balance of reason, and his explanation of the manner in which a man acts irresolutely in the strict, and as we are told the only legitimate sense, applies equally well and for the same reasons to action in the metaphorical sense.

As a matter of fact, love, anger, hatred, jealousy, fear, pity are responsible for bad conduct as really, and perhaps on the whole as often, as the lower appetites, and they operate in exactly the same way as in the normal case. Take the case of pity, for example, a commendable feeling in itself,—reason tells us that it is wrong to give money to street beggars; the feeling of compassion excited by a case of apparent distress suggests that sufferings ought to be relieved, and we accordingly gratify a pure emotion by pleading a reason which does not justify our action. Or take the case of love; there is perhaps no single passion which more effectually “steals away the senses even of close thinkers,”⁸¹ none certainly in which more, and more ingenious reasons can be found for proving black to be white. Whenever pleasure or pain are present, which means whenever any emotions are aroused, we are liable to act against our better judgment, and nothing is gained by making verbal distinctions between cases which equally fall under the same rule.

Aristotle devotes a chapter to the feeling of anger. What he says is puzzling, and not to be reconciled with the explanation of irresolution given in the third chapter.⁸² He argues that to be unable to control anger is less reprehensible than to be unable to control

⁸¹ ἡ τ' ἐκλεψε νόον πύκα περ φρονεόντων. Il. 14. 217.

⁸² 1147, a 24 sqq.

the feelings arising from the sense of touch, because an angry man infers, often wrongly, that some slight or insult is intended and therefore acts "in a sense" under the guidance of reason, whilst the man who acts under the impulse of desire does not. If the text is genuine Aristotle must have forgotten his explanation, given three chapters above, of why we act contrary to reason. Aspasius explains the inconsistency by saying that anger is really moved by reason, whilst desire makes mistakes and flies in the face of obvious reason, and Heliodorus follows on the same lines,⁸³ but there is no hint of this distinction in the text. If the answer given in the third chapter to Sokrates is correct, it is as true of desire as of anger that "it hears reason but mistakes it." Nor is it the fact that anger is more a matter of constitutional tendency than the feelings which prompt errors in the pleasures of bodily sense, unless we are to deny, which Aristotle does not, that there is such a thing as an hereditary or constitutional predisposition towards them. His main contention is in substance true; people who give way to immediate anger are not so much blamed as those who yield to sensual self-indulgence, not because one is more a matter of constitutional tendency than the other, but because the one is felt to be a lower and more purely animal form of misconduct and more generally injurious in its effects on life and character than the other.

Something may be said in support of the Sokratic paradox on grounds not alluded to by Aristotle in this book. Conduct is very largely regulated—perhaps in the long run, as Sokrates once argued, wholly regulated

⁸³ ὁ μὲν θυμὸς τῷ ὄντι κινεῖται ὑπὸ τοῦ λόγου κελεύμενος, ἡ δὲ ἐπιθυμία τὰ πολλὰ ἀμαρτάνει, φανέρου ὄντος ὅτι κωλεύει ὁ λόγος. Asp. 127. 23; Heliod. 146. 4; edit. Heylbut.

—by the balance of pleasure and pain. Now if we knew in the Sokratic sense—*i.e.* knew for certain—that indulgence in a given pleasure would be followed by pains greater in amount than the pleasure itself; if, “like an expert weighman, we could add up the pleasures and pains, the near and the distant, and set one against the other in the balance,”⁸⁴ it is at least arguable that reason would always carry the day against emotion and appetite. It is certain that many a man is kept sober by the fear of a headache, and honest because he believes honesty to be the best policy or dislikes the idea of going to prison, and if indulgence in wine always produced the one, and dishonesty never answered and was invariably detected and punished, most people would probably be sober and honest. If it be said that those who act on such motives are neither sober nor honest, that does not invalidate Sokrates’ statement that reason is the ruling power. Then there is the question of perspective, alluded to in the passage just quoted from Plato and very clearly stated by Aristotle himself. A present pleasure subtends a larger visual angle than a distant one. This fact lends powerful assistance to desire in its contest with reason. “Reason looking to the future bids us refrain; desire looking to the present bids us enjoy; for the immediate pleasure seems absolutely pleasant and good because we do not see the future.”⁸⁵ We take the risk of results

⁸⁴ ὥσπερ ἀγαθὸς ἰστάναι ἄνθρωπος, συνθεῖς τὰ ἡδέα καὶ συνθεῖς τὰ λυπηρά, καὶ τὸ ἐγγὺς καὶ τὸ πόρρω στήσας ἐν τῇ ζυγῷ. Plato, Protag. 356 B.

⁸⁵ ὁ μὲν γὰρ νοῦς διὰ τὸ μέλλον ἀνθέλκειν κελεύει, ἡ δ’ ἐπιθυμία διὰ τὸ ἥδη· φαίνεται γὰρ τὸ ἥδη ἡδὺ καὶ ἀπλῶς ἡδὺ καὶ ἀγαθὸν ἀπλῶς, διὰ τὸ μὴ ὁρᾶν τὸ μέλλον. De Anima iii. 10. 433, b 7.

being uncertain what will happen, and this uncertainty is due to our want of knowledge. If we were perfectly sure what the future would bring forth, and if we had the metric art enabling us to ascertain accurately whether pleasure or pain preponderated, what Sokrates said might turn out, after all, not to be far from the truth.

CHAPTER IX

Book VII., Chapters 11–14.
(1152, b 1—1154, b 34).

Book X., Chapters 1–5.
(1172, a 19—1176, a 29).

FEELINGS IN RELATION TO CONDUCT

PLEASURE AND PAIN

ἔστι τὸ ἡδεσθαι καὶ λυπεῖσθαι τὸ ἐνεργεῖν τῇ αἰσθητικῇ
μεσότητι πρὸς τὸ ἀγαθὸν ἢ κακόν, ἧ τοιαῦτα. De Anima iii.
7. 2. 431, a 10.

ἐπεὶ δ' ἡδονῆς καὶ λύπης ἐγγινομένης καὶ ἡ κακία καὶ ἡ ἀρετή
ἐγγίνεται (περὶ ταύτας γάρ εἰσιν) αἱ δ' ἡδοναὶ καὶ αἱ λύπαι
ἀλλοιώσεις τοῦ αἰσθητικοῦ, φανερόν ὅτι ἀλλοιουμένου τινὸς
ἀνάγκη καὶ ταύτας ἀποβάλλειν καὶ λαμβάνειν. Phys. vii. 3.
247, a 14.

PLEASURE and pain exercise such an important and indeed preponderating influence on conduct, their analysis is so difficult and so many questions have been raised as to their proper place in a well-ordered life, that we expect to find them fully treated by Aristotle. And he has in fact treated them with considerable elaboration and from many points of view, examining and criticising the opinions of his predecessors, discussing them in their bearings on the ordinary and ideal life, and putting forward an original theory of his own as to their nature and manner of operation. The chapters containing these discussions are among the most difficult in the *Ethics*, and they are not made easier by the fact that they are not consecutive but have to be looked for in two places, in the last four chapters of the seventh and in the first five chapters of the tenth books.

This division has naturally led to doubts as to the authenticity of one or other of the two sections, and if we had any good reason to suppose the *Ethics* as we have it to be a treatise written by Aristotle in the way that a modern book is written, we should have to make our choice between the chapters of the seventh and those of the tenth books, and our choice would probably fall on the latter. But we are not driven to make any such choice. So far as we can judge "our *Ethics*" is not a book written or edited for publication.

Its repetitions, its want of systematic arrangement in points of detail, and the carelessness with which much of it is written are against such a supposition. Its groundwork would appear to be notes of lectures delivered by Aristotle at different times and to different persons, part of which bear internal evidence of having been expanded and carefully copied out by their author, whilst other parts are much the looser in their composition, little more indeed than notes, which may be due either to Aristotle himself or to members of his school. These several portions seem afterwards to have been thrown together so as to exhibit Aristotle's ethical teaching in a form as complete and connected as the materials allowed. Assuming the framer of this corpus to have had before him the chapters on pleasure which we now find in the seventh and tenth books, knowing or believing them to contain the substance of what Aristotle said when lecturing on the subject, he would not venture to exclude either set of chapters on the ground of some difference in the point of view or of some repetition. He would be guided by his own judgment as to where he put them, and it is difficult to see what better place could have been found for them than the one in which they are actually found.

In the first ten chapters of the seventh book Aristotle discusses, in the manner already pointed out, the question how it comes about that men so frequently act contrary to their better judgment, and he concludes that the reason is that appetite or physical desire gets the better of them. But this raises the question, how comes physical desire to have the power attributed to it? In the section of the *Ethics* before us several answers are given to this question; the natural tendency to seek pleasure as a good and to avoid pain as an evil; the remedial effect of pleasure as a medicine for pain in general, and in men of certain temperament, in parti-

cular—physiological reasons which Aristotle considers will account for the strong hold which pleasure has and for the aberrations caused by it.¹

The discussion on pleasure and pain which we find at the end of the seventh book is relevant to these points—more relevant than the corresponding discussion on the subject which is found in the first five chapters of book ten. Those chapters, on the other hand, are directly connected with the discussion of happiness regarded as the end of human conduct which immediately follows them. There were those who thought a man might be happy without pleasure, or even under conditions of extreme physical suffering. (1153, b 19.) Against this view Aristotle contends that pleasure is an incident in all life and a necessary incident in the happy life, and his analysis of pleasure in the tenth book is directed to show why this must be so.

Assuming, therefore, the two discussions on pleasure and pain to embody Aristotle's views, one being indispensable as part of the analysis of conduct and the other as completing the notion of its end, it will be best to take the discussions in the order in which they are actually found, although the treatment overlaps, and although each contains some portions which are only strictly relevant to the other.

¹ τὸ μὲν οὖν αἰσθάνεσθαι ὁμοιον τῷ φάναι μόνον καὶ νοεῖν· ὕταν δὲ ἡδὺ ἢ λυπηρόν, οἷον καταφᾶσα ἢ ἀποφᾶσα, διώκει ἢ φεύγει· καὶ ἔστι τὸ ἡδεσθαι καὶ λυπεῖσθαι τὸ ἐνεργεῖν τῇ αἰσθητικῇ μεσότητι πρὸς τὸ ἀγαθὸν ἢ κακόν, ἣ τοιαῦτα. De Anima iii. 7. 431, a 8.

καὶ γὰρ τὸ σῶμα δακνόμενον διατελεῖ διὰ τὴν κρᾶσιν, καὶ ἀεὶ ἐν ὁρέξει σφοδρᾷ εἰσὶν [οἱ μελαγχολικοί]. ἐξελαύνει δὲ ἡδονὴ λύπην ἢ τ' ἐναντία καὶ ἡ τυχοῦσα, ἐὰν ᾗ ἰσχυρά· καὶ διὰ ταῦτα ἀκόλαστοι καὶ φαῦλοι γίνονται. 1154, b 12.

A. *The Theory of Pleasure and Pain as stated in the Seventh Book.*

BOOK VII., CHAPTER 11.—The political philosopher or statesman is bound, Aristotle says, to consider the question of pleasure and pain. His object is to induce that conduct which will make a good citizen. He finds that the single acts which produce character are all more or less influenced by the desire to obtain pleasure and avoid pain; he finds also, that the end of conduct, namely happiness—which consciously or unconsciously is pursued by every one—is implicated with the notion of pleasure. This being so, pleasure must be a good—possibly even the highest good, and pain, its contrary, bad. Now this conclusion on which Aristotle's ethical system may be said to rest was categorically denied by many thinkers. There were those who, like Antisthenes the Cynic, considered that no pleasure was good either in itself or in its consequences,² whilst Speusippus and the old Academy impartially condemned both pleasure and pain alike, regarding each of them as evil inasmuch as each was opposed to a middle state of quiescence or apathy which they regarded as good.

Plato did not go so far as his followers. He dis-

² The opinion of Antisthenes is known to us only from fragments preserved by Diogenes Laertius, Stobæus, and other writers. Judging from these, although he denounced pleasure in no measured terms (*μανείην μᾶλλον ἢ ἡσθείην*), yet he admitted that pleasure was a good when it followed labour, although pleasure preceding labour was bad (*ἡδονὰς τὰς μετὰ τοὺς πόνους διωκτέον, ἀλλ' οὐχι τὰς πρὸ τῶν πόνων*). The reference in the text of the *Ethics* seems nevertheless to be to him.

tinguished impure pleasures, *i.e.* those preceded by a want and therefore tainted by an accompaniment of pain, from pure pleasures not so preceded and accompanied. Although the view taken by him in different dialogues, notably in the *Phædrus* and *Philebus*, is not consistent, he appears on the whole to have thought a combination of intelligence and pleasure to be a high and real good although not the highest, and pleasure by itself to be nothing substantial or permanent, not to be a good at all. The condemnation of pleasure by Speusippus³ and the old Academy followed logically from Plato's own views of the nature of pleasure, for he held it not to be a positive quality but a mere relation to pain, the restoration of the sentient subject from a state contrary to nature to a state in accordance with nature; being therefore a merely transitional process, nothing permanent, or really existent, but only a movement or progress towards existence and reality, it stood condemned by the fundamental assumptions of Platonism.⁴

It was necessary for Aristotle to clear the ground by examining these views. The formal way in which the argument against pleasure was put by the Platonists was this: "All pleasure is a conscious process of transition towards a state of nature (*γένεσις εἰς φύσιν αἰσθητή*), now a process is generically different from an end; pleasure is therefore not an end, and consequently not a good."

³ See 1153, b 4 for Speusippus' argument against the proposition that the contrary of what is to be avoided, in so far as it is to be avoided and is bad, is good.

⁴ ἄρα περὶ ἡδονῆς οὐκ ἀκηκόαμεν ὥς ἀεὶ γένεσις ἐστίν, οὐσία δὲ οὐκ ἐστὶ τὸ παράπαν ἡδονῆς. *Phileb.* 53 C.

CHAPTER 12.—But this argument, observes Aristotle, does not prove pleasure not to be a good, even granting that it is a process to an end. "For there are two kinds of 'good—good relative and good absolute; and although pleasure may not be absolutely good because it is not final, it may yet be relatively good as being something conducive to that which is final."⁵ A man suffers from an ailment accompanied by feverish symptoms; his doctors, desiring to cure him, think it necessary as a first step to reduce his temperature, and give him medicine which has that effect; the medicine is good, not absolutely, for it does not cure the malady, but relatively, for it removes an obstacle to the cure.

"But not only is there the distinction between absolute and relative goods, there is the important distinction between good regarded as function or as condition. Function is no doubt better than condition; still processes which, like pleasure, tend to establish a physical condition have a secondary value—they lead up to a condition from which function may or will result, they may therefore be called accidentally good.⁶ If it be urged that this does not apply to pleasure considered as a reparative process (as with the impure pleasures which are preceded by want and pain) because a physical state which is under repair cannot act, it may be replied that even such states carry on business

⁵ πρῶτον μὲν, ἐπεὶ τὸ ἀγαθὸν διχῶς (τὸ μὲν γὰρ ἀπλῶς τὸ δὲ τινί) καὶ αἱ φύσεις καὶ αἱ ἕξεις ἀκολουθήσουσιν, ὥστε καὶ αἱ κινήσεις καὶ αἱ γενέσεις, καὶ αἱ φαῦλαι δοκοῦσαι εἶναι αἱ μὲν ἀπλῶς φαῦλαι, τινὲ δ' οὐ ἄλλ' αἶρεται τῷδε. 1152, b 26.

⁶ ἔτι ἐπεὶ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ τὸ μὲν ἐνέργεια τὸ δ' ἕξις, κατὰ συμβεβηκὸς αἱ καθιστᾶσαι εἰς τὴν φυσικὴν ἕξιν ἡδεῖαί εἰσιν. 1152, b 34.

as usual during repairs with such portions of the premises as are not under repair.”⁷

Pleasure, therefore, even if limited, as the Platonic argument limits it, to those pleasures which result from the satisfaction of a want, is relatively, accidentally, conditionally good. “It cannot, however, in truth be so limited, for there are pleasures which have nothing to do with the satisfaction of wants, which are preceded by no pains and which Plato himself has called in the *Philebus* ‘unmixed pleasures,’⁸ as for example the pleasures of speculative thought. “These pleasures are not processes or the accompaniments of processes, they are purely and exclusively functional; they are ends and not movements to an end; they arise from the exercise of our powers and not from any process of gaining them.⁹ But even if we confine ourselves, as Platonists invite us to do, to bodily pleasures exclusively, it would be truer to say that pleasure is ‘the unimpeded exercise of a natural state’ (in technical language, the normal exercise of a function) than to describe it as a conscious process towards such a state.”¹⁰

“Pain, on the other hand, is bad; partly bad in itself and without qualification, partly bad in so far as it inter-

⁷ ἔστι δ' ἡ ἐνέργεια ἐν ταῖς ἐπιθυμίαις τῆς ὑπολοίπου ἕξεως καὶ φύσεως. 1152, b 35.

⁸ ἐπεὶ καὶ ἄνευ λύπης καὶ ἐπιθυμίας εἰσὶν ἡδοναί, οἷον αἱ τοῦ θεωρεῖν, τῆς φύσεως οὐκ ἐνδεοῦς οὔσης. 1152, b 36. See Plato, *Phileb.* 52 C.

⁹ οὐ γὰρ γενέσεις εἰσὶν οὐδὲ μετὰ γενέσεως παῖσαι, ἀλλ' ἐνέργειαι καὶ τέλος· οὐδὲ γινομένων συμβαίνουσιν ἀλλὰ χρωμένων. 1153, a 9.

¹⁰ διὸ καὶ οὐ καλῶς ἔχει τὸ αἰσθητὴν γένεσιν φάναι εἶναι τὴν ἡδονήν, ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον λεκτέον ἐνέργειαν τῆς κατὰ φύσιν ἕξεως, ἀντὶ δὲ τοῦ αἰσθητὴν ἀνεμπόδιστον. 1153, a 12.

feres in some way or other with the exercise of power;¹¹ but if pain be bad, pleasure, its contrary, must be good."

"But," continues Aristotle, "not only is pleasure 'a good,' some pleasures may well be 'the good.'¹² For what is happiness but the active exercise either of all our powers or some of them? If this exercise has free play,¹³ there is some pleasure which can be identified with the *Summum Bonum*; nor does the consideration that there are many bad pleasures weaken this conclusion, which is in accordance with the universal and reasonable belief that the happy life must be a pleasant one. There is also the observed fact that all animals seek pleasure, and this is some evidence that pleasure is 'in a way' the best of all things."¹⁴

"We need not require men and the lower animals to seek for the same pleasure—no one state is best for all—the argument is satisfied if they agree in seeking pleasure of some kind or other; nor are we even bound to assume that the pleasures which they seek or imagine themselves to seek are the real object of their aim. Unconsciously perhaps they do pursue the same, for all organisms, animal and vegetal alike, tend to reproduce their kind and to become immortal in their offspring, and this natural impulse (which as it aims at immortality may be called divine) is not improbably the one universal pleasure which organised beings of

¹¹ ἡ μὲν γὰρ ἀπλῶς κακόν, ἡ δὲ τῷ πᾶσι ἐμποδιστική. 1153, b 2.

¹² 1153, b 7.

¹³ ἂν ᾗ ἀνεμπόδιστος. 1153, b 11.

¹⁴ καὶ τὸ διώκειν δ' ἅπαντα καὶ θήρια καὶ ἀνθρώπους τὴν ἡδονὴν σημείον τι τοῦ εἶναι πῶς τὸ ἄριστον αὐτήν. 1153, b 25.

every order consciously or unconsciously strive to attain." ¹⁵

CHAPTER 14.—The general truth above stated that pleasure is "a good" and perhaps "the good" is obscured by the fact that in the language and experience of most people pleasure means the bodily pleasures, the pleasures of sense. Now what is the reason that so large a part of mankind think only of the pleasures of sense and scarcely know any others? "It is worth while," Aristotle says, "to examine this, for to see the cause of error often helps one to the truth. The reason is a physiological one—'The living being is ever suffering'; ¹⁶ pain is the universal law of life; the vital functions, even when perfectly normal, cannot act without pain. In the case of those functions which are continuous, such as sight, hearing, or the processes of growth, we are not conscious of the pain because it is always present, but in certain circumstances we do become conscious of it. For instance, persons of a warm and passionate tem-

¹⁵ ἀλλ' ἐπεὶ οὐχ ἡ αὐτὴ οὔτε φύσις οὐθ' ἕξις ἡ ἀρίστη οὐτ' ἔστιν οὔτε δοκεῖ, οὐδ' ἡδονὴν διώκουσι τὴν αὐτὴν πάντες, ἡδονὴν μέντοι πάντες. ἴσως δὲ καὶ διώκουσιν οὐχ' ἣν οἴονται οὐδ' ἣν ἂν φαῖεν, ἀλλὰ τὴν αὐτήν· πάντα γὰρ φύσει ἔχει τι θεῖον. 1153, b 29.

φυσικώτατον γὰρ ἔργον τοῖς ζῶσιν, ὅσα τέλεια καὶ μὴ πηρώματα, ἣ τὴν γένεσιν αὐτομάτην ἔχει, τὸ ποιῆσαι ἕτερον οἶον αὐτό, ζῶον μὲν ζῶον, φυτὸν δὲ φυτόν, ἵνα τοῦ ἀεὶ καὶ τοῦ θεοῦ μετέχωσιν ἣ δύνανται. De Anima ii. 4. 415, a 26.

¹⁶ ἀεὶ γὰρ πονεῖ τὸ ζῶον, ὥσπερ καὶ οἱ φυσιολόγοι μαρτυροῦσι, τὸ ὀρεῖν, τὸ ἀκούειν φάσκοντες εἶναι λυπηρόν· ἀλλ' ἤδη συνήθεις ἐσμέν, ὥς φασίν. 1154, b 7. Infants cry because they have not got used to the pain of living.

perament are in a constant state of bodily irritation ;¹⁷ the period of active growth in the young body produces restlessness and feverish excitement like that of wine.¹⁸ Accident, disease, constitutional infirmity all produce severe pain, and then there are the pangs of hunger and thirst and the discomfort of fatigue all calling for regular alleviation. Physical pain in various forms and degrees being always with us, mankind have sought the remedy of physical pleasure ; severe suffering calls for powerful doses of the antidote, but men have not been careful to proportion the medicine to the disease, but having got into the way of taking the remedy, find at last that they cannot do without it, and become drunkards of pleasure by constantly tasting it.¹⁹ This is the reason why the pleasures of sense seem to so many people to be the highest pleasures ;—to the mass of mankind, indeed, they are the only pleasures they know. Nature has so ordered things that a negative state is painful ;²⁰ she abhors a vacuum. In the effort to avoid the discomfort of apathy men fly to pleasure, abuse the remedy and become incorrigibly bad.”

“ But this is true,” continues Aristotle, “ only of those pleasures which are preceded by pain—the mixed pleasures of which Plato speaks. There are essentially natural pleasures, not remedial, and you cannot have too

¹⁷ τὸ σῶμα δακνόμενον διατελεῖ διὰ τὴν κρᾶσιν. 1154, b 13.

¹⁸ ὁμοίως δ' ἐν μὲν τῇ νεότητι διὰ τὴν αὔξησιν ὥσπερ οἱ οἰνωμένοι διάκεινται, καὶ ἡδὺ ἡ νεότης. 1154, b 9.

¹⁹ ἐξελαύνει δὲ ἡδονὴ λύπην ἢ τ' ἐναντία καὶ ἡ τυχοῦσα, ἐὰν ἡ ἰσχυρά· καὶ διὰ ταῦτα ἀκόλαστοι καὶ φαῦλοι γίνονται. 1154, b 13.

²⁰ τὸ δὲ μηδέτερον πολλοῖς λυπηρὸν διὰ τὴν φύσιν. 1154, b 6.

much of them because they are connected with conditions wholly good, and when you cannot have too much of a good thing you cannot have too much of the pleasure which results from it." ²¹

"It is true that even these pure pleasures do not persist, but this is owing to the imperfection of human nature. If, instead of being mortal and composite, our bodies were simple and immortal like those of the Gods, we should live without any longings, irritation or pain, and our pleasures would be permanent.²² The poet has truly said 'change is pleasant' but it is owing to our physical imperfection that this is so." ²³

It is by physiological considerations of this kind that Aristotle accounts for the hold that the pleasures of sense have on man, and for the misuse of the word "pleasure" which in popular language is confined to the gratification of appetite. It explains why men act contrary to their better judgment and lose command of themselves to the point of acting habitually and without compunction in a way of which their cool judgment disapproves. That difficulty cannot be removed either by denying the facts, as Sokrates did, or by drawing distinctions between science and opinion as was done by Plato. The reason lies deeper and is to be found in the physical constitution of man which makes pleasure a necessity of life; only the few can resist the voice

²¹ τῶν μὲν γὰρ ἕξεων καὶ κινήσεων ὕσων μὴ ἔστι τοῦ βελτίονος ὑπερβολή, οὐδὲ τῆς ἡδονῆς. 1154, a 13.

²² ἐπεὶ εἴ του ἡ φύσις ἀπλῇ εἴη, αἰὲ ἡ αὐτὴ πρᾶξις ἡδίστη ἔσται. 1154, b 24.

²³ μεταβολὴ δὲ πάντων γλυκύ, κατὰ τὸν ποιήτην, διὰ πονηρίαν τινά. 1154, b 28.

of the Siren, and those few require to be bound by the strong fetters of law and early and continuous discipline, just as Odysseus was obliged to be tied to the mast.²⁴

Such, translated into modern language, is the theory of pleasure as we read it in the last four chapters of the seventh book. It is to be remarked that Aristotle's treatment of the subject is to a great extent dialectical and controversial; he wishes in the first place to show how wrong his dear friends of the Academy were in their definition of pleasure, and what a partial view they took of it. His own definition accordingly takes the form of an amendment of theirs rather than of an independent description. "It is not," he says, "a good way of putting it to say that pleasure is a felt process; we had better call it 'the activity of a physical state,' and read the word 'unimpeded' for the word 'felt.'"²⁵ We shall see that when Aristotle comes to describe pleasure in the tenth book he calls it, not an activity but an incident or accompaniment of an activity, something which perfects it; either description will do, although the latter best brings out his meaning. The word "energy" (activity, function) involves the notion of movement, is indeed, as Aristotle himself tells us, chiefly derived from that notion;²⁶ in a general way energy may be called "a

²⁴ δησάντων σ' ἐν νηὶ θεῶν χεῖράς τε πόδας τε
ὀρῶν ἐν ἱστοπέδῃ, ἐκ δ' αὐτοῦ πείρατ' ἀνήφθω,
ὄφρα κε τερπόμενος ὄπ' ἀκούης Σειρήνοιν.

Odys. 12, 50.

²⁵ οὐ καλῶς ἔχει τὸ αἰσθητὴν γένεσιν φάναι εἶναι τὴν ἡδονήν,
ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον λεκτέον ἐνέργειαν τῆς κατὰ φύσιν ἕξεως, ἀντὶ δὲ
τοῦ αἰσθητὴν ἀνεμπόδιστον. 1153, a 13.

²⁶ ἐλήλυθε δ' ἡ ἐνέργεια τοῦνομα—ἐκ τῶν κινήσεων μάλιστα.
δοκεῖ γὰρ ἡ ἐνέργεια μάλιστα ἡ κίνησις εἶναι. Met. viii. 3;
1047, a 30, 32.

movement"; as opposed to "power" it means either the movement which brings a thing to a state of perfection or the state of perfection to which it is brought.²⁷ In intimating his dissent in Book VII. from the Platonic view of pleasure as "a movement which produces a normal state," and in order to emphasise his dissent therefrom, Aristotle uses the word "energy" in the sense of "a state of perfection"; in Book X., where a dialectical reason is not uppermost, he calls it "that which completes a state"—a movement which brings our energies to perfection; either meaning is justified by his technical use of the word energy.²⁸

When we pass from the critical to the constructive portions of these chapters, when Aristotle comes to investigate the reason of the error into which the Platonists and others had been led in looking at pleasure as the mere satisfaction of a want, we pass from logical and psychological distinctions into the field of physiology and pathology. Here Aristotle is not content to examine the phenomena of pleasure and pain as they affect mankind alone; he sees that the influence of these feelings will be operative on all sentient beings. All living organisms are moved by pleasure and pain, not necessarily by the same pleasures or the same pains, not necessarily by those which they consciously realise and admit, yet still perhaps by the same, for all things have by nature "something of the divine." Aristotle seems here to refer to the powerful instinct of

²⁷ Met. viii. 6. 1048, b 8.

²⁸ In the De Anima pleasure is identified with energy, τὸ ἡδεσθαί ἐστιν ἐνεργεῖν αἰσθητικῇ μεσότητι πρὸς τὸ ἀγαθὸν ἢ κακόν, ἢ τοιαῦτα. 431, a 10. This shows how little reliance can be placed on the difference in the formulæ of the seventh and tenth books as a test of authenticity.

reproduction—the creation of another self—which he elsewhere calls the most natural work of living things and which he attributes to their desire to have a share, if possible, in immortality.²⁹

We see then that Aristotle's view, under which physical pleasure is regarded as a motive force leading to a normal or healthy state, is sharply distinguished from that held by Plato and his school under which it was regarded as a curative or restorative process only; always preceded by a sense of pain,³⁰—a mere relation, nothing positive, but only the satisfaction of a want. This is true only of bodily pleasures, and only partially true even of them. For the pleasure attendant on a perfect state of health, seen especially in the young, where the sense of vitality causes them to leap

“and fetch mad bounds
Which is the hot condition of their blood,”

as an outlet for their superfluous energy, is a positive feeling having no relation to precedent pain. In the period of youth and growth animals are drunk with the pleasure of living.³¹ Indeed pleasure is so far from being a negative state that a negative state is to many persons constitutionally painful; and in fact, if we may believe the physiologists, who tell us that suffering is the law of life, a negative state does not really exist. No vital processes according to these authorities—not

²⁹ ἴσως καὶ διώκουσιν οὐχ' ἦν οἶονται οὐδ' ἦν ἂν φαῖεν, ἀλλὰ τὴν αὐτήν. πάντα γὰρ φύσει ἔχει τι θεῖον. 1153, b 31.

³⁰ Phileb. 31 D. 53 C.

³¹ ἐν μὲν τῇ νεότητι διὰ τὴν αὐξήσιν ὥσπερ οἱ οἰνωμένοι διάκεινται. 1154, b 9.

even the exercise of the senses of sight and hearing, not the growth of a tissue nor the circulation of the blood, can be carried on without pain. We do not notice it, but that is only because it is always there.³²

But inasmuch as no prevalent opinion is wholly wrong, that view of pleasure which regards it as the satisfaction of a want, although inadequate as an explanation of all the phenomena, is so far true that it does account for that class of pleasures under whose influence men become intemperate and in some cases incorrigibly wicked.³³

Painless pleasures however, the pure pleasures of Plato's *Philebus*, may be safely indulged in, for these are natural and essential, admitting no excess; they are to be carefully distinguished from the pleasures which are preceded by a sense of want and pain, and which are "accidental" and not essential. Natural pleasures are those which help the action of a sound and healthy physical structure.

One reason why these merely accidental, remedial pleasures are so much sought after has already been given; it is because they kill pain. But there is another reason, which is that they are invariably associated with the essential pleasures which accompany normal function. Whenever repair is going on, the healthy function of that portion of the structure or organ which remains sound must be assumed. A tissue or organ altogether destroyed cannot function; the process of cure implies the action of a portion of the structure which

³² ἀεὶ γὰρ πονεῖ τὸ ζῷον, ὥσπερ καὶ οἱ φυσιολόγοι μαρτυροῦσι, τὸ ὁρᾶν, τὸ ἀκούειν φάσκοντες εἶναι λυπηρόν· ἀλλ' ἤδη συνήθεις ἐσμέν, ὥς φασίν. 1154, b 7.

³³ 1154, b 15.

remains sound, and this action of itself gives rise to pleasure.³⁴

We see, then, how composite is our physical structure, one part may be acting quite naturally, whilst another part is acting contrary to nature; one part is healthy and another part diseased; they seem to pull different ways, and hence that want of simplicity and continuity, that change from pleasure to pain, and pain to pleasure which is observable in organic action. We have here a physical explanation of the problem of divided will. Men desire to do one thing, and do another thing because their physical constitution is not simple and homogeneous but twofold and heterogeneous, and the current of life does not flow smoothly and uninterruptedly. Hence, bad men are easily moved from their purpose, they are in unstable equilibrium and at odds with themselves—their constitution requires change; it is neither simple nor good.³⁵

B. *The Theory of Pleasure as stated in Book X.*

If now we pass to the tenth book we find that there are few points mentioned in the seventh which are not touched, some more lightly and some in fuller detail, and with additional or different illustrations and arguments, but we also find pleasure presented under a new aspect; not as something necessary to organic life, or as something which accounts for the aberrations caused

³⁴ ὅτι γὰρ συμβαίνει ἰατρεύεσθαι τοῦ ὑπομένοντος ὑγιοῦς πράττοντός τι, διὰ τοῦτο ἡδὺν δοκεῖ εἶναι. 1154, b 18.

³⁵ ὥσπερ γὰρ ἄνθρωπος εὐμετάβολος ὁ πονηρός, καὶ ἡ φύσις ἡ δεομένη μεταβολῆς· οὐ γὰρ ἀπλῇ οὐδ' ἐπικλή. 1154, b 29.

by the gratification of the senses, but as something without which a full life would be impossible. This is strictly relevant to the theory of happiness under its two aspects with which the treatise closes, happiness as the end of purely human conduct, and happiness as the consummation of the ideal life. The points both of agreement and difference presented by the two accounts are what may be looked for in the case of a man speaking at different times upon a subject which his context leads him to regard from different points of view.

After an interesting introduction, an excellent example of literary style proving that Aristotle could write when he chose, he proceeds in Chapter 2 to state and examine the arguments of Eudoxus in favour of the proposition that happiness is the chief good. These arguments derive their weight, he says, rather from the high character of the author than from their intrinsic merits:

Pleasure is the highest good, said Eudoxus—

1. Because it is the universal object of pursuit, and because that which all men think to be good and which all animals, including man, try to obtain, must be "*the good*;"³⁶
2. Because all sentient beings avoid its contrary, pain;
3. Because it is choice-worthy for its own sake alone; if you feel pleasure no one asks you, "Why do you want to be pleased?"³⁷
4. Because, if added to any other good, it enhances the value of that good.

³⁶ τὸ δὲ πᾶντ' ἐπὶ ταῦτ' φέρεσθαι μνηύειν ὡς πᾶσι τοῦτο ἄριστον ὂν—τὸ δὲ πᾶσιν ἀγαθόν, καὶ οὐ πᾶντ' ἐφίεται, τὰγαθὸν εἶναι. 1172, b 12.

³⁷ οὐδένα γὰρ ἐπερωτᾶν τίνος ἕνεκα ἥδεται. 1172, b 22.

Aristotle does not dissent from Eudoxus' first and principal reason, nor could he consistently do so, for he had already, in the first chapter of the *Ethics*, admitted its validity; "men have rightly defined 'the good,'" he says, "as that which all things aim at."³⁸

The second and third reasons are passed over in silence; yet the third reason deserved some remark, for the attribute claimed in it for pleasure, namely that it is sought for its own sake and not for the sake of anything else, is one which Aristotle had declared, in nearly the same words, to be characteristic of the highest good.³⁹ Aristotle confines himself to the fourth reason; "pleasure must be the chief good because if added to any other good it enhances it"; truly observing that this only shows pleasure to be a good, not the chief good, for that by the chief good we mean something which we choose irrespective of anything else, and quoting with approval Plato's argument in the *Philebus* to this effect.⁴⁰ Eudoxus' assertion of the absolute supremacy of pleasure having thus been, as regards three of his four arguments, allowed to go by default, Aristotle proceeds to address himself to a wholly different question: is pleasure, not *the* good but *a* good? "What," he asks, "has this property of

³⁸ καλῶς ἀπεφάνησαν τὰγαθόν, οὗ πάντ' ἐφίεται. 1094, a 2.

³⁹ τελειότερον δὲ λέγομεν, τὸ καθ' αὐτὸ διωκτὸν τοῦ δι' ἕτερον καὶ τὸ μηδέποτε δι' ἄλλο αἰρετὸν τῶν (καὶ) καθ' αὐτὰ καὶ δι' αὐτὸ αἰρετῶν. 1097, a 30.

⁴⁰ εἴκει δὴ οὗτός γε ὁ λόγος τῶν ἀγαθῶν αὐτὴν ἀποφαίνειν, καὶ οὐδὲν μᾶλλον ἑτεροῦ. 1172, b 26. Cf. Plato, *Phileb.* 60 E. ταῦτα δὲ λέγε καὶ περὶ φρονήσεως, εἴ τις ἄνευ πάσης ἡδονῆς καὶ τῆς βραχυτάτης δέξαιτ' ἂν φρόνησιν ἔχειν μᾶλλον ἢ μετὰ τινων ἡδονῶν, ἢ πάσας ἡδονὰς χωρὶς φρονήσεως μᾶλλον ἢ μετὰ φρονήσεως αὐτίνος; ΠΡΩ. οὐκ ἔστιν, ὦ Σώκρατες, ἀλλ' οὐδὲν δεῖ ταῦτά γε πολλάκις ἐπερωτᾶν.

being incapable of addition and at the same time of being universally shared? Those who insist that what everything aims at is not good, perhaps talk nonsense. For what everybody thinks, we assert to *be*.”⁴¹ The point, already disposed of in Book VII,⁴² is re-examined and discussed with great ingenuity and elaboration and at considerable length. Aristotle had already said “that the fact that men and brutes alike follow pleasure is some evidence of its being in a way that which is best.”⁴³ He here uses the very same argument in support of the conclusion that pleasure is, not that which is best but that which is good, which is something like making a hole for the cat and another for the kitten.

Nothing more clearly shows the hold which verbal and metaphysical distinctions had gained in the Greek schools than the fact that in a practical treatise like the *Ethics* it should have been thought necessary to argue the matter at all. A definition of “good” which excludes an object which everybody tries to attain, by whatever academical considerations it may be justified, is certainly not supported by the facts of experience, and if, as Aristotle had said a few pages before,⁴⁴ arguments which are to

⁴¹ τί οὖν ἐστὶ τοιοῦτον, οὗ καὶ ἡμεῖς κοινωνοῦμεν ; τοιοῦτον γὰρ ἐπιζητεῖται· οἱ δ' ἐνιστάμενοι ὥς οὐκ ἀγαθὸν οὗ πάντ' ἐφίεται, μὴ οὐθὲν λέγουσιν. ἂ γὰρ πᾶσι δοκεῖ, ταῦτ' εἶναι φασιν. 1172, b 34.

⁴² ἀνάγκη οὖν τὴν ἡδονὴν ἀγαθόν τι εἶναι. 1153, b 4.

⁴³ καὶ τὸ διώκειν δ' ἅπαντα καὶ θηρία καὶ ἀνθρώπους τὴν ἡδονὴν σημείον τι τοῦ εἶναι πῶς τὸ ἄριστον αὐτήν. 1153, b 25.

⁴⁴ οἱ γὰρ περὶ τῶν ἐν τοῖς πάθεσι καὶ ταῖς πράξεσι λόγοι ἥττον εἰσι πιστοὶ τῶν ἔργων· ὅταν οὖν διαφωνῶσι τοῖς κατὰ τὴν αἴσθησιν, καταφρονούμενοι καὶ τάληθες προσαναιροῦσιν. 1172, a 34.

influence life must harmonise with men's actions, there would seem to be little hope of persuading people not to try to get what every one is observed to be diligently engaged in getting. Aristotle, however, thought that it would never do to allow an adversary's challenge to pass unanswered, and he accordingly deals with the various points raised.

The opponents of Eudoxus—Speusippus and the Academy—denied in the first place that it followed from the universal pursuit of pleasure by all animals, rational and irrational alike, that pleasure was a good. "There would be something in this, replies Aristotle, if the pursuit was confined to irrational animals, but if rational animals do it, what is the force of the argument? And possibly, even in the lower animals, there is a natural impulse which they cannot resist which causes them to aim at their proper good."⁴⁵

It had next been urged that it does not follow that because pain is bad, pleasure is good: they may both be bad as opposed to a state which is between the two, and yet good, like the mean in conduct. Aristotle's answer to that is a practical one; "if both are bad both would be avoided, but this is not the case."⁴⁶

CHAPTER 3.—"Then it is argued⁴⁷ that the good is definite and pleasure is not, for it is sometimes more, sometimes less; "but," replies Aristotle, "if by pleasure

⁴⁵ εἰ μὲν γὰρ τὰ ἀνόητα ὀρέγεται αὐτῶν, ἣν ἂν τι τὸ λεγόμενον, εἰ δὲ καὶ τὰ φρόνιμα, πῶς λέγοιεν ἂν τι; ἴσως δὲ καὶ ἐν τοῖς φαύλοις ἔστι τι φυσικὸν ἀγαθὸν κρεῖττον ἢ καθ' αὐτά, ὃ ἐφίεται τοῦ οἰκείου ἀγαθοῦ. 1173, a 2.

⁴⁶ 1173, a 10.

⁴⁷ 1173, a 15.

is meant a state, namely the state of 'being pleased,'⁴⁸ the argument proves too much, for were it valid, the moral virtues would not be good, inasmuch as they are states, and there are degrees in justice and courage; if, however, the conclusion be drawn from considering the nature of pleasure itself,⁴⁹ the distinction between pure and impure pleasures is lost sight of; there is nothing indefinite in pure pleasure. In fact, it is erroneous to say that even a definite thing cannot admit of degrees; health is definite enough, but look at health in different people, or even in the same person at different times, and you will see that there is sometimes more health and sometimes less."⁵⁰

To appreciate this reason it must be remembered that health was considered as an external something or formal cause impressed on the material cause, body, by the doctor, the efficient cause. It corresponds to the engraved figure on a signet ring, the impression of which is received by the wax. This figure may be larger or smaller, more or less defined in different impressions according to circumstances, and so the perfect balance or proportion in the bodily functions which we call health may vary in quantity and degree in individual cases without ceasing to be definite in any given case.

"The Platonic argument against pleasure derived from its being, as alleged, a motion and a becoming is next dealt with from a point of view different from that taken in the seventh book. If a motion, it must

⁴⁸ εἰ μὲν ἐκ τοῦ ἡδεσθαι τοῦτο κρίνουσιν. 1173, a 17.

⁴⁹ εἰ δὲ ταῖς ἡδοναῖς, μή ποτ' οὐ λέγουσι τὸ αἴτιον, ἂν ᾧσιν αἱ μὲν ἀμιγεῖς αἱ δὲ μικταί. 1173, a 22. See Plato, Phileb. 46 B sqq. 52 C.

⁵⁰ καὶ τί κωλύει, καθάπερ ὑγίεια ὠρισμένη οὔσα δέχεται τὸ μᾶλλον καὶ ἥττον, οὕτω καὶ τὴν ἡδονήν; 1173, a 23.

admit degrees of speed—absolute, uniform motion being out of the question in the world in which we live. But although we may pass into a state of pleasure quickly, just as we may get suddenly angry, the state of pleasure itself admits of no movement;⁵¹ and if pleasure is a becoming, it would be resolved on its dissolution into the elements from which it arose, but the destruction of that from which pleasure springs is pain, which can scarcely be thought to be one of the elements of pleasure.⁵² Nor can pleasure be considered to be the filling up of a void,⁵³ although no doubt it arises during the process; this opinion comes from considering the pleasures of eating and drinking which are preceded by a sense of want, and omitting to consider the pleasures of intellect, hearing and sight, which have no such antecedent.”

Against those who adduce disreputable pleasures in support of the argument that pleasure is not good, it is enough to reply that only disreputable people are pleased by them,⁵⁴ although it may be also fairly added that the harm lies, not in the pleasures themselves but in their sources; and that pleasures differ specifically according as their sources are bad or good.⁵⁵ And there are many things which we care about although no pleasure results, such as sight, memory, knowledge. “It is clear, therefore,” Aristotle concludes, “that pleasure is not the

⁵¹ μεταβάλλειν μὲν οὖν εἰς τὴν ἡδονὴν ταχέως καὶ βραδέως ἔστιν, ἐνέργειν δὲ κατ’ αὐτὴν οὐκ ἔστι ταχέως. 1173, b 2.

⁵² γένεσις τε πῶς ἂν εἴη; δοκεῖ γὰρ οὐκ ἐκ τοῦ τυχόντος τὸ τυχὸν γένεσθαι, ἀλλ’ ἐξ οὗ γίνεται, ἐς τοῦτο διαλύεσθαι· καὶ οὗ γένεσις ἡ ἡδονή, τούτου ἡ λύπη φθορά. 1173, b 4.

⁵³ 1173, b 7 sqq.

⁵⁴ 1173, b 20.

⁵⁵ 1173, b 26.

chief good, and that every pleasure is not desirable; moreover that there are some pleasures desirable in themselves, differing either specifically or in their sources." 56

The whole of the preceding discussion has been directed against the opinion of Speusippus and the Academy that pleasure is not good;—Eudoxus' assertion that it is the chief good is nowhere seriously challenged; it is surprising, therefore, to find Aristotle summing up his results by saying that "it seems to be clear that pleasure is not the chief good nor wholly desirable, although some pleasures are so." Such a conclusion lends colour to a remark which is sometimes made that when Aristotle says a thing is clear you may be sure there is some obscurity.

After this destructive criticism Aristotle proceeds to inquire "what kind of thing pleasure is?" 57 It is not a movement or process. Movement of every kind requires time; its specific character is to be incomplete at any given moment of time.⁵⁸ But pleasure does not require time, and its specific character is to be complete at any given moment.⁵⁹ "There are, in fact," Aristotle continues, "many states of consciousness from which the

56 ὅτι μὲν οὖν οὔτε τὰγαθὸν ἡ ἡδονὴ οὔτε πᾶσα αἰρετὴ δῆλον ἔοικεν εἶναι, καὶ ὅτι εἰσὶ τινες αἰρεταὶ καθ' αὐτὰς διαφέρουσαι τῷ εἶδει ἢ ἀφ' ὧν. 1174, a 8.

57 τί δ' ἐστὶν ἡ ποιοῦ τι. 1174, a 13.

58 οὐκ ἔστιν ἐν ὁπωοῦν χρόνῳ λάβειν κίνησιν τελείαν τῷ εἶδει, ἀλλ' εἶπερ, ἐν τῷ ᾧπαντι. 1174, a 27.

59 τῆς ἡδονῆς δ' ἐν ὁπωοῦν χρόνῳ τέλειον τὸ εἶδος. 1174, b 5. τὸ γὰρ ἐν τῷ νῦν ὅλον τι. 1174, b 9.

idea of time is absent.⁶⁰ Sight, for instance, is instantaneous; the act of vision is a whole, complete in itself and incapable of being divided into moments, nothing precedes it and nothing follows; it is like a mathematical point. You may have successive acts of vision, and the relation between them may be expressed in terms of time, but each single act is a complete presentment;⁶¹ just as present time, 'the now,' is a complete individual presentment. Pleasure is in this respect exactly like sight; it is a whole, complete at the moment it is experienced, and you cannot fix upon any instant of it and say that it will be more complete in the next instant.⁶² This is one characteristic of pleasure; to be one complete, instantaneous whole. A second characteristic is that it accompanies every sensation, as well as every exercise of mind and of theorising intelligence. Pleasure is in proportion to the completeness with which the function is exercised, and the completeness of the function is determined by its relation to its best object, assuming the function to be in a healthy state. When these conditions are present 'pleasure completes the function.' But pleasure is not related to functional excellence in the way in which sensation is related to its appropriate object, nor as health

⁶⁰ οὐ γὰρ πάντων ταῦτα λέγεται, ἀλλὰ μεριστῶν καὶ μὴ ὅλων. 1174, b 11.

⁶¹ οὐδὲ γὰρ ὁράσεώς ἐστι γένεσις οὐδὲ στιγμῆς οὐδὲ μονάδος οὐδὲ τούτων οὐθὲν κίνησις οὐδὲ γένεσις · οὐδὲ δὴ ἡδονῆς. 1174, b 12.

⁶² ὅλον γάρ τι ἐστί, καὶ κατ' οὐδένα χρόνον λάβοι τις ἂν ἡδονὴν ἥς ἐπὶ πλείω χρόνον γινομένης τελειωθήσεται τὸ εἶδος. 1174, a 17. οὐδὲ γὰρ ὁράσεώς ἐστι γένεσις οὐδέ στιγμῆς οὐδὲ μονάδος, οὐδὲ τούτων οὐθὲν κίνησις οὐδὲ γένεσις · οὐδὲ δὴ ἡδονῆς. ὅλον γὰρ τι. 1154, b 12.

is related to a healthy body. Pleasure does not cause functional excellence; it follows it, as a good complexion follows health.”⁶³

The process of sensation as conceived by Aristotle and stated in the second chapter of his book on Psychology⁶⁴ consists in the immaterial form of the object of sense being impressed on the sensorium by the intermediation of the special organ of sense. This process, which in modern language would be called perception, involves motion, or the exercise of power, and it only arises when the powers of perceiving and being perceived possessed by the subject and object respectively are called into exercise by their conjunction. Aristotle illustrates it by reference to what happens when a doctor cures his patient. The doctor's purpose is to bring health to the patient; he is the agent by whose action health, the formal cause of the cure, is induced on the patient. A condition of health is followed by certain indicative signs; by the hue and bloom of the complexion and by a feeling of vigour and elasticity. Now pleasure follows our sensations in a way analogous to that in which the marks of health follow the condition of health; it is “a supervening end”; it is no part of any process, nor does it arise whilst any process is being carried on,—the Academy are quite wrong, says Aristotle, in supposing that it does—it springs up when the pro-

⁶³ κατὰ πᾶσαν γὰρ αἴσθησιν ἐστὶν ἡδονή, ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ διάνοιαν καὶ θεωρίαν, ἡδίστη δ' ἡ τελειοτάτη, τελειοτάτη δ' ἡ τοῦ εὖ ἔχοντος πρὸς τὸ σπουδαιότατον τῶν ὑπ' αὐτήν· τελειοῖ δὲ τὴν ἐνέργειαν ἡ ἡδονή. 1174, b 20. τελειοῖ δὲ τὴν ἐνέργειαν ἡ ἡδονή οὐχ ὥς ἡ ἕξις ἐνυπάρχουσα, ἀλλ' ὥς ἐπιγινόμενόν τι τέλος, οἷον τοῖς ἀκμαίοις ἡ ὥρα. 1174, b 31.

⁶⁴ De Anima iii. 2. 425, b 12 sqq.

cess is finished, and in that sense it may be said to complete it.⁶⁵

"This being so, the pleasure will of course vary with the excellence of the process of which it is the result. When, and so long as, everything is as it should be, when sense and its object, when mind and its object harmonise and correlate, the feeling will be most intense."⁶⁶

It is no objection to say that on this theory the normal exercise of our senses would keep us in a constant state of pleasure; the activity of our senses, following a law governing everything human, cannot go on continuously at the same level; attention flags, the impressions become blunter, we feel tired and the pleasure consequently fades away.⁶⁷

What is true of sensuous activity is equally true of intellectual activity in its various forms. Knowledge of different orders is the result of a relation between different objects of knowledge and the corresponding parts of the mind.⁶⁸ Whenever a due relation between subject and

⁶⁵ τελειοῖ δὲ τὴν ἐνέργειαν ἢ ἡδονὴ οὐκ ὥς ἡ ἕξις ἐνυπάρχουσα, ἀλλ' ὥς ἐπιγόμενόν τι τέλος, οἷον τοῖς ἀκμαίοις ἡ ὥρα. 1174, b 31.

⁶⁶ ἕως ἂν οὖν τό τε νοητὸν ἢ αἰσθητὸν ἢ οἷον δεῖ καὶ τὸ κρῖνον ἢ θεωροῦν, ἔσται ἐν τῇ ἐνεργείᾳ ἢ ἡδονῇ· ὁμοίων γὰρ ὄντων καὶ πρὸς ἀλλήλα τὸν αὐτὸν τρόπον ἐχόντων τοῦ τε παθητικοῦ καὶ τοῦ ποιητικοῦ ταὐτὸ πέφυκε γίνεσθαι. 1174, b 33.

⁶⁷ πῶς οὖν οὐδεὶς συνεχῶς ἥδεται; ἢ καμνει; πάντα γὰρ τὰ ἀνθρώπεια ἀδυνατεῖ συνεχῶς ἐνεργεῖν. 1175, a 3.

⁶⁸ τὸ μὲν γὰρ πρῶτον παρακέκληται ἢ διάνοια καὶ διατεταμένως περὶ αὐτὰ ἐνεργεῖ ὥσπερ κατὰ τὴν ὄψιν οἱ ἐμβλέποντες, μετέπειτα δ' οὐ τοιαύτη ἢ ἐνέργεια ἀλλὰ παρημελημένη· διὸ καὶ ἡ ἡδονὴ ἀμαυροῦται. 1175, a 7.

object is established pleasure arises, and it varies in degree in proportion to the completeness of the relation established.

"Pleasure, therefore, completes function, but it does not complete it in the way that perception is completed by the establishment of a relation between the organ of sense and its object, nor in the way in which a cure is completed by the doctor impressing the form of health on the patient. 'To complete' is used in these illustrations in the sense that efficient formal and material causes combine to produce a given end; but when we say that pleasure completes function we mean that it arises, necessarily indeed, but as something extraneous to function, springing up on the conclusion of a process in which it has no part.⁶⁹

"Pleasure and life are therefore inseparably connected; in the absence of the functions constituting life there can be no pleasure, and each one of those functions is completed by the pleasure which finishes it. With good reason, therefore, do men pursue pleasure, for it is the completion of life."⁷⁰

"We can thus explain the difference between different kinds of pleasure, and answer the objection of those who point to inferior or bad pleasures as proving pleasure itself not to be a good; there is a specific difference between functions; those of the mind are not like those of the body, the function or proper work of one animal

⁶⁹ οὐ τὸν αὐτὸν δὲ τρόπον ἢ τε ἡδονὴ τελειοῖ καὶ τὸ αἰσθητὸν τε καὶ ἡ αἰσθησις, σπουδαῖα ὄντα, ὥσπερ οὐδ' ἡ ὑγίεια καὶ ὁ ἰατρὸς ὁμοίως αἰτία ἐστὶ τοῦ ὑγιαίνειν. 1174, b 23.

⁷⁰ ἢ δ' ἡδονὴ τελειοῖ τὰς ἐνεργείας, καὶ τὸ ζῆν δὴ, οὗ ὀρέγονται. εὐλόγως οὖν καὶ τῆς ἡδονῆς ἐφίενται· τελειοῖ γὰρ ἑκάστῳ τὸ ζῆν, αἰρετὸν ὄν. 1175, a 15.

differs from that of another, the resulting pleasures must therefore differ *in specie*.⁷¹

The proposition that pleasures arising from the exercise of different functions are specifically different is supported by two considerations.

"The pleasure 'proper' to a function—*i.e.* arising without more on the mere exercise of it, increases the action of that function. Thus people who like geometry become better geometricians and understand the propositions better.⁷² But inconsistent pleasures impede function almost as much as pain would do, for if a barrel organ happens to be playing in the street, the mathematician is unable to attend to his mathematics because the pleasure of listening to the music destroys the pleasure of working out the problem.⁷³ So too (this is a negative instance) people who eat apples and oranges in a theatre generally do it when the acting is bad.⁷⁴ It is a curious fact that different pleasures have the same effect as proper pains, although they act differently."⁷⁵

"If a man dislikes writing or arithmetic he will be a bad penman or accountant, not because his attention is diverted, but because it is not applied. Some pleasures

⁷¹ ὅθεν δοκοῦσι καὶ τῷ εἶδει διαφέρειν. 1175, a 21.

⁷² συναύξει γὰρ τὴν ἐνέργειαν ἢ οἰκεία ἡδονή· μᾶλλον γὰρ ἕκαστα κρίνουσι καὶ ἐξακριβοῦσιν οἱ μεθ' ἡδονῆς ἐνεργοῦντες, οἷον γεωμετρικοὶ γίνονται οἱ χαίροντες τῷ γεωμετρεῖν. 1175, a 30.

⁷³ οἱ γὰρ φίλαυλοι ἀδυνατοῦσι τοῖς λόγοις προσέχειν, ἂν κατακούσωσιν αὐλοῦντος, μᾶλλον χαίροντες αὐλητικῇ τῆς παρούσης ἐνεργείας. 1175, b 3.

⁷⁴ καὶ ἐν τοῖς θεάτροις οἱ τραγηματίζοντες, ὅταν φαῦλοι οἱ ἀγωνιζόμενοι ᾧσι, τότε μάλιστ' αὐτὸ δρῶσιν. 1175, b 12.

⁷⁵ αἱ δ' ἀλλότριαι ἡδوناὶ εἴρηται ὅτι παραπλήσιόν τι τῇ λύπῃ ποιοῦσιν· φθείρουσι γὰρ, πλὴν οὐκ ὁμοίως. 1175, b 22.

therefore are higher, some lower in the scale of purity and dignity, and those which follow on imperfect, deranged or diseased functions will even be bad. But these last cannot be properly taken into account, for that conduct which is 'good,' as measured by the standard of the 'good man,' in other words the man who best expresses the prevailing sentiments of his time, must always be appealed to, and only those pleasures of which he approves can be admitted."⁷⁶

Such in brief outline is the view of pleasure developed in the tenth book, fuller and perhaps more in the spirit of Aristotle than the one which we find in the seventh book. The following are the chief differences between the two. In the earlier book the subject is treated from first to last in a critical spirit, and more for the purpose of clearing the ground of misconceptions and false analogies than of elaborating a formal theory, the positive teaching coming in incidentally; in the later book, although criticism is not absent, it plays a relatively unimportant part. In Book VII. pleasure is looked at as the normal function of a state—the result of general health; the special organs of sense are not alluded to; in Book X. the illustrations are taken from the special organs of sense; it is on these analogies rather than on that of the body generally that the argument is there founded.

Prominence is given in the seventh book to the bodily pleasures as being the cause of the aberration of conduct described in the earlier part of that book, and the fact that

⁷⁶ δοκεῖ δ' ἐν ἅπασιν τοῖς τοιοῦτοις εἶναι τὸ φαινόμενον τῷ σπουδαίῳ. εἰ δὲ τοῦτο καλῶς λέγεται, καθάπερ δοκεῖ, καὶ ἔστιν ἐκάστω μέτρον ἡ ἀρετὴ καὶ ἀγαθός, ἣ τοιοῦτος, καὶ ἡδοναὶ εἶεν ἂν τούτῳ φαινόμεναι, καὶ ἡδέα οἷς οὗτος χαίρει. 1176, a 15.

pleasure is a remedy for pain and that the abuse of the remedy leads to moral vice is insisted on;⁷⁷ neither of these points are taken in the tenth book, because pleasure is there regarded as a complement of happiness and not as an explanation of misconduct.

The language in which pleasure is described in Book X. (it cannot be called a definition), "something which completes and stimulates function," is more accurate than that in Book VII., where it is called "the unimpeded exercise of a normal state," although it may be noted that the latter is put forward tentatively and merely as an amendment of the Academic definition.⁷⁸ The subject of pain is more discussed in the earlier than in the later book.

If, neglecting points of difference, we endeavour to collect Aristotle's views as expressed in the two books and regard them as a whole, they appear to be more scientific and founded on a wider induction of facts than any of the theories current in his time, so far as we know them. Plato in the *Philebus* warns his readers against looking to the lower animals for evidence on pleasure. Aristotle, as might be expected from a comparative biologist, brings animals of every order, and indeed all organic life, within the scope of his inquiry. His theory is no doubt defective, partly owing to imperfect anatomical and physiological knowledge for which he cannot be blamed, but partly also to his own analysis of the motives of human conduct. We call pleasure and pain "feelings," and consider them to be the immediate cause of the greatest part of conduct, and if the past history of the race be taken into consideration, of all conduct. Aristotle did not think them to

⁷⁷ διὰ ταῦτα ἀκόλαστοι καὶ φαῦλοι γίνονται. 1154, b 14.

⁷⁸ οὐ καλῶς ἔχει—ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον λεκτέον. 1153, a 13, 14. "It is not a good way of putting it—let us rather say—"

be feelings, but something consequent on feelings. "I call feelings," he says, "such things as desire, anger, fear, confidence, joy, affection, hatred, longing, envy, pity—in a word, states which are followed by pleasure and pain."⁷⁹ The word "feeling," in fact, in Aristotle's usage usually preserves its Greek etymological meaning of a passive state, and indicates that the subject of it has been acted upon or modified; hence it is not a power, but the result of the action of a power, and moral conduct is said by him to be implicated with it, not affected by it as by an efficient cause.⁸⁰

Aristotle's analysis of the motives of conduct thus excludes feeling as a direct contributory cause. Intuition and desire are the two elements which determine action,⁸¹ and feelings cannot be brought under either. Therefore, instead of saying that pleasure and pain cause men to act in such and such a way, he says that they assist the motives which cause them to act—they stimulate thought and heighten desire, and because men cannot but choose the one and avoid the other they have a powerful influence on life.

As regards ethical theory it matters little whether pleasure and pain act directly or indirectly, but it makes considerable difference in psychological analysis.

Aristotle's conception of the nature and influence of pleasure is by no means confined to mankind. His general proposition is, "Every function has its proper pleasure."⁸² He looks at the matter as a physiologist

⁷⁹ 1105, b 21.

⁸⁰ δοκεῖ συνωκειῶσθαι τοῖς πάθεσιν ἢ τοῦ ἡδους ἀρετή, 1178, a 15.

⁸¹ ἢ ὀρεκτικὸς νοῦς ἢ προαίρεσις ἢ ὀρεξις διανοητική, καὶ ἡ τοιαύτη ἀρχὴ ἄνθρωπος. 1139, b 4.

⁸² καθ' ἐκάστην ἐνέργειαν οἰκεία ἡδονή ἐστιν. 1175, b 26.

under the relation of organ and function, and consequently wherever this relation exists, that is to say throughout the whole range of organic life, pleasure must be found accompanying and stimulating functional activity; just as every living thing has its own proper end or work, so it has its own proper pleasure helping that work. Pleasure and life are in truth so closely connected that they cannot be dissociated; life is nothing else than the sum of our functional activity, and every component activity is completed by its proper pleasure.⁸³ Aristotle's theory may be generalised in this formula, "Life assumes a relation between pleasure and feelings of such a kind that actions are stimulated and heightened by pleasure, and weakened and depressed by pain." If, instead of actions, he had said "beneficial actions" he would have been near to what is now considered the truth. Here, as often, he was misled by his teleology.

He says, on the whole, little about pain, and what he does say is incomplete and scarcely satisfactory. It is an evil, we are told, both positive in itself, and negative as interfering with the normal exercise of bodily function. But he looks at it, not exclusively, but too much from its negative side; if pleasure is good, then pain must be bad; if pleasure increases energy, pain must diminish it, and his attention is mainly directed to those pains which arise from the deficient action of some structure or organ, "pains of want"—hunger, thirst, and the like—nothing is said about the equally important class of pains which arise expressly from excessive action. But the pains resulting from excess of vital action, from too great nervous activity or overtaxed function of any kind, cannot be put

⁸³ ἡ δὲ ζωὴ ἐνέργειά τις ἐστὶ—ἄνευ τε γὰρ ἐνεργείας οὐ γίνεται ἡδονή, πᾶσάν τε ἐνέργειαν τελειοῖ ἡ ἡδονή. 1175, a 12.

out of the account. Aristotle would have expressed himself more correctly and completely if he had treated pain not merely as the result of a physical want, but as the result of any wide departure from a normal physical state whether in excess or in defect. He here missed an excellent argument in favour of his doctrine of the Mean. "Look at our bodily organs," he might have said—"if their action is deficient, we have pain of one kind; if their action is excessive, we have pain of another kind; when it is neither too much nor too little we have pleasure." He insists on mental pleasures, but he is silent as to mental pains. But pains of this order—worries, anxieties, disappointments, the tortures of remorse, of baulked passion, such sufferings as Priam underwent, and the thousand and one miseries which we create for ourselves by thinking—play a much more important part in life than physical pain. And as to physical pain, although he is aware that it accompanies certain abnormal states of body, he nowhere suggests that it is a danger signal without whose warning animal life could hardly have been maintained. He tells us why animals seek pleasure, but he does not tell us why they avoid pain, although the latter question is from every point of view as important as the former one.

Plato insisted on the distinction between those pleasures which are preceded by pain or discomfort and those which are not, and the intellectual pleasures were assumed by him to belong to the latter class and were therefore called "pure." Aristotle adopted this view. That such pleasures are not immediately preceded by pain is true—but that they are not preceded by pain can scarcely be said with truth. An accomplished chemist or astronomer doubtless derives satisfaction of a high order from the pursuit of his science—but he was not born accomplished. Before he arrives at the stage of knowledge which yields him satisfaction, a tedious and disagreeable apprenticeship has

to be undergone—a state of antecedent pain. When a man knows Greek well enough to read Homer or Plato with facility he enjoys a “pure” pleasure, but before he can do so he has to learn the Greek grammar—a disagreeable process at the best, and not infrequently attended with acute physical suffering. Pleasures of every kind, pure and impure, have to be paid for in coin of some denomination; some are cheaper and others more expensive, but none are got for nothing.

Aristotle puts, but dismisses as not of immediate importance, the question whether we desire life for the sake of pleasure or pleasure for the sake of life.⁸⁴ It is not so certain as some ancient and modern authorities have assumed, how he would have answered this question if he had gone into it. If it were open to dissociate the two and consider each as an end capable of being independently pursued, as Plato does in the *Philebus*, doubtless Aristotle would have pronounced for life. But, as he points out in the immediate context, this is not possible, the two being indissolubly bound together.⁸⁵ On his own statements the matter stands in this way: “Life is nothing more than the sum of our functions; we consciously live only so far as we are conscious of exercising our powers, and that exercise involves pleasure as an incident, not as an accident.” If this be true, would Aristotle or can any one doubt, that what we desire is the pleasure of living and not the act of living. Put it the other way; suppose Aristotle’s physiologists to have been literally correct in saying that life is a state of suffering; suppose all vital functions to be accompanied

⁸⁴ πότερον δὲ διὰ τὴν ἡδονὴν τὸ ζῆν αἰρούμεθα ἢ διὰ τὸ ζῆν τὴν ἡδονήν, ἀφείσθω ἐν τῷ παρόντι. 1175, a 18.

⁸⁵ συνεζεύχθαι μὲν γὰρ ταῦτα φαίνεται καὶ χωρισμὸν οὐδέχθαι. 1175, a 19.

by disagreeable or painful sensations; if men were perpetual dyspeptics, if every beat of the heart gave pain, and if we could not think without severe headache, would any one desire to live? As likely as not Aristotle would have answered this question as he answered a somewhat similar one by saying, "people who talk in this way, whether they know it or not, talk nonsense."⁸⁶

Aristotle's reference to the opinion of the physiologists who maintained that suffering is the law of life deserves attention as an early sample of that pessimism which has found modern expression in Schopenhauer and also in Kant. When Schopenhauer says that "unless suffering is the direct and immediate object of life our existence must entirely fail of its aim," and when Kant tells us that "Man is urged by a necessity of his nature to go out of the present as a state of pain in order to find in the future one less irksome," and that "Man finds himself in a never ceasing pain," we recognise the spirit and almost the words of the physiologists referred to by Aristotle. On this view, pain is the positive and pleasure the negative force in life. But Aristotle was not a pessimist. Looking at pleasure and pain from the physiological point of view, his conclusion appears to be this: "Those bodily pleasures are good and may be indulged in which accompany the normal exercise of our physical organs, and the pains which are contrary to these should be avoided; looking at the matter ethically, he concludes that the pleasures of which the good man approves, that is moderate pleasures, are good."⁸⁷ The

⁸⁶ οἱ δὲ τὸν τροχιζόμενον καὶ τον δυστυχίαις μεγάλαις περιπίπτοντα εὐδαίμονα φάσκοντες εἶναι, ἐὰν ἢ ἀγαθός, ἢ ἑκόντες ἢ ἄκοντες οὐδὲν λέγουσιν. 1153, b 19.

⁸⁷ δοκεῖ δ' ἐν ἅπασιν τοῖς τοιοῦτοις εἶναι τὸ φαινόμενον τῷ σπουδαίῳ. 1176, a 15.

opinion of the good man will be formed by education directed by the political philosopher, "for he is the architect of the end with reference to which we call things simply bad or good."⁸⁸ His opinion, necessarily a varying opinion, will determine the rightness of those pleasures which are independent of physical life; for the others the ultimate test of rightness is whether they assist the normal exercise of vital function or not; if they do the resulting pleasures are good, and if otherwise, bad.

On the whole Aristotle has come near to indicating the way in which pleasure and pain influence conduct, without following it up. Had he been aware of the vast period of time during which these feelings have operated and had he fully appreciated the extent to which tendencies once acquired are transmitted from generation to generation, it is likely that he would have spoken in stronger language than he does on the negative influence of pain and the positive influence of pleasure, and he might have perceived more fully than he appears to have done why actions of one kind are thought to be pleasurable and actions of another kind painful.

His theory as it stands succeeds in accounting for the influence of these feelings on conduct without incurring criticism by making them its final end. If any one were to call him an hedonist he would say, "I do not suggest that any one should act for the sake of pleasure; conduct ought to be determined by considerations into which pleasure and pain do not directly enter. Act under the rules and for the ends I have laid down; you will find pleasure to be the consequence, but it is an external consequence and must be regarded as such,

⁸⁸ οὗτος γὰρ [ὁ τὴν πολιτικὴν φιλοσοφῶν] τοῦ τέλους ἀρχιτέκτων, πρὸς ὃ βλέποντες ἕκαστον τὸ μὲν κακὸν τὸ δ' ἀγαθὸν ἀπλῶς λέγομεν. 1152, b 2.

even though it may be certain to follow. And remember that although pleasure follows and completes function, it only does so when there is a proper relation between sensation and thought and their respective objects. If you indulge immoderately in the pleasures of sense, physical pain will sooner or later be the consequence ; if you expend your mental powers on frivolous or mischievous pursuits you will not be doing your work in life, and you will not obtain either the highest happiness which results from the exercise of the best part of your mind, nor that lower degree which every man may attain by moral action."

CHAPTER X

Books VIII., IX.
(1155, a 3—1172, a 15).

FRIENDSHIP

ὅτω δὲ μὴ ἔνι κοινωνία, φιλία οὐκ ἂν εἴη. Plato, Gorgias
507 E.

παλαιὸς γὰρ λόγος ἀληθὴς ὢν, ὡς ἰσότης φιλότητα ἀπεργάζεται, μάλα μὲν ὀρθῶς εἴρηται καὶ ἐμμελῶς. Plato, Laws
757 A.

Nil ego contulerim jucundo sanus amico. Hor. Sat.
1. 5. 44.

ARISTOTLE treats the subject of friendship very fully, devoting to it no less than two of the ten books of the Ethics—one fifth of the entire work. Nor can we wonder at the large space allotted to it in view of the ethical and political importance of the subject and of the wide meaning given by him to the word—a meaning larger than is sanctioned by modern usage, at least in our own language. Every association, in Aristotle's view gives rise to some form of friendship. The mere fact of men agreeing to unite for a given object, great or small, creates an identity of interest in the associates for the furtherance of that object, and its joint prosecution involves some form of friendship.¹ The members of a cricket club, of a missionary society, of a trades union or of a state are necessarily friends, *quoad* the purpose for which they unite, for they all agree to promote it. So, too, kinsmen and comrades are friends, but for a different reason—not because their association depends on agreement, but because it is created by circumstances.² Almost every tie of sympathy between

¹ ἐν ἀπάσῃ γὰρ κοινωνίᾳ δοκεῖ τι δίκαιον εἶναι, καὶ φιλία δέ. 1159, b 26. ἐν κοινωνίᾳ γὰρ ἡ φιλία. 1159, b 31.

² ἐν κοινωνίᾳ μὲν οὖν πᾶσα φιλία ἐστίν, καθάπερ εἴρηται. ἀφορίσειε δ' ἂν τις τήν τε συγγενικὴν καὶ τὴν ἐταιρικὴν. . . . καὶ ἡ συγγενικὴ δὲ φαίνεται πολυειδὴς εἶναι, ἡρτῆσθαι δὲ πᾶσα ἐκ τῆς πατρικῆς. 1161, b 12, 16.

men arising from their joint prosecution of a definite purpose, or from their being brought into relation with one another for an indefinite purpose or for no purpose at all, constitutes "a friendship" in the wide Aristotelian sense of the word. These feelings do not, however, spring up at random; they arise in a certain order, and Aristotle traces their genesis in the following manner.

There is, (1) *the pairing instinct*—an impulse common to man and other animals, given by nature for a good end, viz., the continuance of the species, and giving rise to a special form of friendship between those who are so brought together.

There is, (2) *the family feeling*, a development of the sexual relation, wider in extent but less powerful in degree, friendship of blood—the feeling which unites parents and offspring and kinsmen in their various degrees.

There is, (3) *the social feeling*, producing a friendship between persons not related by blood, but who are brought together either by agreement between themselves or by circumstances; clubmen, comrades, fellow-citizens, men following like occupations, having like tastes or pursuits or associated by the accident of neighbourhood or travel. Every association, natural, casual, or deliberate, may give rise to friendship of a kind, and the word expresses a feeling which tends to spring up whenever human beings are brought together, however slender or temporary may be the tie. But its fullest expression is only found, according to Aristotle, in the case of political association, and in that specific form of it known as the State. It is here that its real importance comes out; it is the bond which holds society together, more important in this respect than the great social virtue of justice itself, for if men are friends there is no need for justice, equitable dealing superseding it, but no amount of justice would enable men to dispense with friendship or even

to live tolerably without it.³ Lastly, (4) it is an indispensable condition of the happy life.

Aristotle notices that the word friendship is used by poets and physicists in a wider and deeper sense than the one he assigns to it⁴—Euripides speaking of “the parched earth yearning for the rain, and the heavens loving to discharge themselves in rain upon the earth,” whilst Empedoklēs and Herakleitus had used the words “friendship” and “strife” to describe atomic and physical attraction and repulsion. These usages Aristotle puts aside as irrelevant; he confines himself to cases in which human beings and human feelings are concerned.⁵ So viewed, friendship has a value which cannot be over-estimated; it is not only necessary to life, it ennobles it; it is one of the things which make life worth living; a joy in wealth, a help in poverty; “it keeps the young from error; it comforts and ministers to the aged and supplies the deficiencies of their failing strength, whilst to those in the prime of life it increases their powers of action and makes them more capable of worthy deeds. “When two go together,” as Homer

3 *ἔοικε δὲ καὶ τὰς πόλεις συνέχειν ἡ φιλία, καὶ οἱ νυμοθέται μᾶλλον περὶ αὐτὴν σπουδάζειν ἢ τὴν δικαιοσύνην· ἡ γὰρ ὁμόνοια ὁμοίον τι τῇ φιλίᾳ ἔοικεν εἶναι—καὶ φίλων μὲν ὄντων οὐδὲν δεῖ δικαιοσύνης, δίκαιοι δ' ὄντες προσδέονται φιλίας, καὶ τῶν δικαίων τὸ μάλιστα φιλικὸν εἶναι δοκεῖ.* 1155, a 22.

4 *καὶ περὶ αὐτῶν τούτων ἀνώτερον ἐπιζητοῦσι καὶ φυσικώτερον, Εὐριπίδης μὲν φάσκων ἑρᾶν μὲν ὄμβρου γαῖαν ξηρανθεῖσαν κτλ.* 1155, b 1.

5 *τὰ μὲν οὖν φυσικὰ τῶν ἀπορημάτων ἀφείσθω (οὐ γὰρ οἰκεία τῆς παρούσης σκέψεως)· ὅσα δ' ἐστὶν ἀνθρωπικὰ καὶ ἀνήκει εἰς τὰ ἥδη καὶ τὰ πάθη, ταῦτ' ἐπισκεψόμεθα.* 1155, b 8.

says, "they are better able both to observe and to act." ⁶

The fact that friendship is necessary to life indicates that it is one of nature's devices for preserving it. Just as Aristotle derived courage from the spirited element in man—a quality given to him and to other animals by nature for self-protection—so he finds the origin of friendship in those instincts, sexual and parental, which lead animals to pair and afterward to protect their young. He points out, not indeed in the *Ethics* but elsewhere,⁷ how with the development of life and intelligence this instinct expands; ceasing in the lower animals at the birth of the offspring, whilst those higher in the scale of intelligence watch over their young for longer and still longer periods, until in man and some other quadrupeds parental care extends to full maturity and takes the form of intercourse and friendship.⁸

This rudimentary friendship, as it may be called, is developed and made more persistent as the home passes

⁶ καὶ νέοις δὲ πρὸς τὸ ἀναμάρτητον καὶ πρεσβυτέροις πρὸς ἑραπείαν καὶ τὸ ἐλλείπον τῆς πράξεως δι' ἀσθένειαν βοηθεῖ, τοῖς τ' ἐν ἀκμῇ πρὸς τὰς καλὰς πράξεις. "σύν τε δύο ἔρχομένω." καὶ γὰρ νοῆσαι καὶ πράξαι δυνατώτεροι. 1155, a 12.

⁷ ἔοικε δὲ καὶ ἡ φύσις βούλεσθαι τὴν τῶν τέκνων αἰσθησιν ἐπιμελητικὴν παρασκευάζειν. ἀλλὰ τοῖς μὲν χεῖροσι τοῦτ' ἐμποιεῖ μέχρι τοῦ τεκεῖν μόνον, τοῖς δὲ καὶ περὶ τὴν τελέωσιν, ὅσα δὲ φρονιμώτερα, καὶ περὶ τὴν ἐκτροφὴν. τοῖς δὲ δὴ μάλιστα κοινωνοῦσι φρονήσεως καὶ πρὸς τελεωθέντα γίνεται συνήθεια καὶ φιλία, καθάπερ τοῖς τε ἀνθρώποις καὶ τῶν τετραπόδων ἐνίοις, τοῖς δ' ὄρνισι μέχρι τοῦ γεννῆσαι καὶ ἐκθρέψαι. *De Gen. Animal.* iii. 2. 753, a 7.

⁸ τοῖς δὲ μάλιστα κοινωνοῦσι φρονήσεως καὶ πρὸς τελεωθέντα γίνεται συνήθεια καὶ φιλία. *De Gen. Animal.* 753, a 11.

into the clan, the clan into the village, and the village into the city. Friendship is thus in its origin a pure feeling, and a feeling it remains throughout the whole course of its history, although in its highest form it is so little liable to change that it becomes "like a habit."⁹ Being nevertheless essentially a feeling and not a habit, and belonging to the emotional¹⁰ and not to the rational part of our nature, Aristotle does not class it amongst the virtues of conduct properly so called. It is "a kind of virtue or something that goes along with virtue,"¹¹ nor does the doctrine of the mean apply to it. It is true that there is a social quality called friendship, one of those numerous cases of the same word being used in different senses—which is one of the virtues of conduct and to which the doctrine of the mean applies, namely, the habit of making oneself pleasant in society without either overcomplaisance or too great plainness of speech. This quality, already described in the fourth book, is there distinguished from friendship properly so called on the express ground that feeling and affection do not enter into it as they do into friendship.¹²

With this virtue we have nothing to do here. Feeling and affection are the chief ingredients of true friendship, and in some shape or other enter into all.

⁹ *ἔοικε δὲ ἢ μὲν φίλησις πάθει, ἢ δὲ φιλία ἔξει.* 1157, b 28.

¹⁰ *ἐν τῷ ἐπιθυμητικῷ.* Top. iv. 5. 126, a 12.

¹¹ *ἀρετή τις ἣ μετ' ἀρετῆς.* 1155, a 4.

¹² *διαφέρει δὲ τῆς φιλίας, ὅτι ἄνευ πάθους ἐστὶ καὶ τοῦ στέργειν οἷς ὁμιλεῖ.* 1126, b 22.

TEXT.

CHAPTER 2.—Aristotle opens the formal treatment of his subject in this chapter by first ascertaining the objects of the feeling of friendship, *i.e.* the things which we are said to be fond of. These are generalised into things which are either good, pleasant or useful. Excluding our liking for inanimate objects, our feeling towards which is purely selfish,—for we like wine and wish it to be good, but that is in order that we may drink it—and confining ourselves to instances which are not merely self-regarding, a distinction is to be made between the cases in which the object of our feeling is aware of it and the cases in which he is not. We may wish well to a man we have never seen, as to the commander of an Antarctic Expedition, or to a man we have seen but do not know, as to a popular actor, but as these persons are unaware of our feeling, it cannot be called friendship. Friendship can only arise when each party is aware of the existence of a kindly feeling in the other. That kindly feeling must take the shape of wishing good to the other for his own sake. “Reciprocal well-wishing for good between persons each of whom is aware that the feeling exists in the other,” constitutes friendship.¹³

The three objects of our liking, things good, pleasant

¹³ δεῖ ἄρα εὖνοεῖν ἀλλήλοις καὶ βούλεσθαι τὰγαθὰ μὴ λανθάνοντας. 1156, a 3.

or useful, may be generalised into two—the good or the pleasant;¹⁴ these are ultimate ends incapable of further analysis, for what is profitable is only profitable as a means of obtaining them. It is, moreover, to be noticed that when we talk of the “good” as an object of liking, we use the word in a relative and not an absolute sense; what a man likes is that which appears to him good, not necessarily that which really is so.

CHAPTER 3.—Pleasure, profit and goodness are, however, objects specifically distinct, and the friendships grounded on them are therefore specifically distinct.¹⁵ Aristotle proceeds to point out the differences involved in these distinctions. In the case of friendships founded on pleasure or profit it is not the persons themselves who are liked, but that which the persons supply, pleasure or advantage as the case may be. They may therefore be called accidental friendships, for the capacity of being agreeable or useful is a separable accident of character.¹⁶ It follows that when the object ceases for any reason to be agreeable or useful the friendship ceases. Aristotle remarks that it is characteristic of elderly persons to form useful friendships, and that only rarely do they associate for the mere sake of pleasure, and that when they do so it is in expectation of some collateral advantage;¹⁷ the young, on the other hand, make friends for pleasure and chiefly for the pleasure of the

¹⁴ φιλητὰ ἂν εἴη τὰγαθόν τε καὶ τὸ ἡδὺ ὡς τέλη. 1155, b 20.

¹⁵ διαφέρει δὲ ταῦτα ἀλλήλων εἶδει · καὶ αἱ φιλήσεις ἄρα καὶ αἱ φιλίαι. 1156, a 6.

¹⁶ 1156, a 16.

¹⁷ ἐπὶ τοσοῦτον γάρ εἰσιν ἡδεῖς ἐφ' ὅσον ἐλπίδας ἔχουσιν ἀγαθοῦ. 1156, a 29.

moment; they are like lovers, passion guides them; they become devoted all at once, and cool as rapidly, frequently changing their mood in the course of a single day, but when the feeling is upon them they wish to be always together, differing in this respect from the old, who do not care to see much of one another.¹⁸ There remains as an object of friendship "the good" as distinguished from the merely pleasant or profitable, meaning by good, relative not absolute good, as has been said.

A friendship based on this ground, although less liable to interruption than those described, may be broken in various ways. Two people strike up a friendship because they sympathise with one another, say in philanthropic, charitable, or intellectual pursuits, undeniably good objects and well fitted to be the basis of a worthy friendship. But they may be deceived; what seemed pure philanthropy may be only a desire for reputation or profit under the veil of benevolence, and what seemed love of knowledge for its own sake may be only a pretence put forward for social or other reasons. Even if the qualities are genuine to begin with, they may be altered or effaced by time or circumstance. And so in one way or another, either by persons being deceived, or by their deceiving themselves, or by the action of various causes, it often happens that a friendship founded on "good" grounds—grounds morally commendable and full of promise—may be weakened and broken. Aristotle discusses in a later chapter how we ought to act when these changes occur.¹⁹ Friendship founded on good character of an ordinary type, although better and more

¹⁸ συνημερεύειν δὲ καὶ συζῆν οὔτοι (the young) βούλονται. 1156, b 4. οὐ πάνυ δ' οἱ τοιοῦτοι (the old) οὐδὲ συζῶσι μετ' ἀλλήλων· ἐνίοτε γὰρ οὐδ' εἰσὶν ἡδεῖς. 1156, a 27.

¹⁹ Eth. 9. 3. 1165, a 36.

likely to last than that of which pleasure or profit is the ground, is therefore, no less than human happiness itself, open to the changes and chances of life. It follows that friendship, if it is to be complete in the Aristotelian sense of the word, that is fully developed in all its parts with reference to its specific excellence,²⁰ must be between those whose characters are complete, who are like one another in being fully good and, friendship being reciprocal, who alike desire each other's highest good.²¹ This friendship will be as permanent as the best moral character itself, and each friend will be, without any qualification whatever, both good, pleasant, and profitable to himself and to his friend.

"In perfect friendship, then, the incidents of affection and permanence just spoken of will be found in the friends—for in perfect friendship both are alike; the other incidents too, namely absolute goodness and absolute pleasure, which are the highest objects of all virtue, will also be present."²²

This is an ideal relationship; everything is there—unselfish desire for another's happiness, the pleasure which is derived from one's own good conduct and from observing the good conduct of others, a mutual help in good works, and not least, the fact that the relation is permanent.

²⁰ ἕκαστον γὰρ τότε τέλειον καὶ οὐσία πᾶσα τότε τελεία ὅταν κατὰ τὸ εἶδος τῆς οἰκείας ἀρετῆς μὴτὲν ἐλλείπη μόριον τοῦ κατὰ φύσιν μεγέθους. Met. iv. 16. 1021, b 21.

²¹ τελεία δ' ἐστὶν ἡ τῶν ἀγαθῶν φιλία καὶ κατ' ἀρετὴν ὁμοίων· οὗτοι γὰρ τὰγαθὰ ὁμοίως βούλονται ἀλλήλοις ἢ ἀγαθοί. 1156, b 7.

²² ταύτη δὲ πάνθ' ὑπάρχει τὰ εἰρήμενα καθ' αὐτούς· ταύτη γὰρ ὁμοιοί· καὶ τὰ λοιπά, τὸ τε ἀπλῶς ἀγαθὸν καὶ ἡδύ, ἀπλῶς ἐστίν, μάλιστα δὲ ταῦτα φιλητά. 1156, b 21.

Such friendships are necessarily rare, for the number of really good men is strictly limited, and moreover they require time for their establishment; you must know a man well, and you cannot know him well until you have eaten the proverbial quantity of salt with him.²³ But once formed they are not easily severed.

CHAPTER 4.—The friendship of men of full virtue is therefore complete, not only in respect of time but in respect of the equivalence of good which each friend receives from the other; if the return is not identical it is at all events similar, and it extends to every subject in which friends have a right to receive benefit from each other.²⁴

Friendships based on pleasure and utility are only semblances of real friendship; they are never so lasting, but they last longest where the return is the same in kind and where it proceeds from the same source. A friendship in which each gets pleasure of the same kind from the other is more permanent than one in which pleasure is repaid by utility, and more permanent than one in which pleasure of one kind is returned by pleasure of different kind. For instance, two persons whose common bond is the fact that they are agreeable companions are more likely to remain friends than a couple of lovers, where devotion and attention on one side is repaid by the satisfaction of gazing on the beloved object. "Perhaps she ceases to be beautiful; perhaps you cease

²³ κατὰ τὴν παροιμίαν οὐκ ἔστιν εἰδῆσαι ἀλλήλους πρὶν τοὺς λεγομένους ἄλας συναλαλῶσαι. 1156, b 26.

²⁴ καὶ κατὰ πάντα ταῦτα γίνεται καὶ ὁμοία ἑκατέρῳ παρ' ἑκατέρου, ὅπερ δεῖ τοῖς φίλοις ὑπάρχειν. 1156, b 34.

to think her so, and then, goodbye to the friendship." ²⁵

If, however, affection is based, as it sometimes is, on character and disposition, the above remark does not apply; between so-called lovers, the least satisfactory and permanent bond is that in which a specifically different return is made—fortune or social position on one side and what pretends to be feeling on the other. This is a mere bargain. There is this further distinction between true friendships and friendships based on pleasure or utility: the former is only possible between the good, whereas bad and good or bad and bad may be united in the latter.

Beyond this, friendship based on good personal character is distinguished from the other forms by being secure against the attacks of calumny.²⁶ Strictly speaking, it is the only form of friendship worthy of the name, but as a concession to popular language the other kinds must be included. Inasmuch, however, as they are not founded on the essentials of character, it is rare to find the same persons united on the grounds both of utility and agreeability. Good men, indeed, find both profit and pleasure in one another; these incidents naturally flowing from genuine goodness, but pleasure and profit being only accidents in the friendships founded on them are not often found conjoined.²⁷

²⁵ οὐ γὰρ ἐπὶ τοῖς αὐτοῖς ἡδονται οὗτοι, ἀλλ' ὁ μὲν ὑρῶν ἐκείνων, ὁ δὲ θεραπευόμενος ὑπὸ τοῦ ἑραστοῦ· ληγούσης δὲ τῆς ὥρας ἐνίοτε καὶ ἡ φιλία λήγει. 1157, a 6.

²⁶ μόνη ἡ τῶν ἀγαθῶν φιλία ἀδιάβλητός ἐστιν. 1157, a 20.

²⁷ οὐ πάνυ δ' αὖται συνάπτουσιν, οὐδὲ γίνονται οἱ αὐτοὶ φίλοι διὰ τὸ χρήσιμον καὶ διὰ τὸ ἡδύ· οὐ γὰρ πάνυ συνδυάζεται τὸ κατὰ συμβεβηκός. 1157, a 33.

CHAPTER 5.—Although friendship is not, strictly speaking, a moral virtue, we find in it a distinction analogous to that which is characteristic of the moral virtues—the distinction between a state and the function of a state. Brave or temperate men have not always the opportunity of being brave or temperate, and similarly, friends cannot always act as friends, although the friendly disposition is there; absence or separation prevents its manifestation, and sometimes, as the proverb says, dissolves friendship altogether,²⁸ so important is constant exercise to the maintenance of any power. This reminds us of another distinction between true friendship and its imitations.

CHAPTER 6.—The great test of friendship is the ability to live together; old people, and it is among the old as a rule that utility friendships prevail, take little pleasure in one another's society; when they meet it is for the sake of some advantage, and they may have a large circle of friends and know none of them intimately; but complete friendship cannot have many objects—it is like love, and you cannot be in love with many persons at the same time; “complete friendship points to perfection.”²⁹

Those whose friendship is based on pleasure on the

²⁸ “πολλὰς δὲ φιλίας ἀπροσηγορία διέλυσεν.” 1157, b 13. ἀπροσηγορία, “impossibility of approach.” Neighbourhood, on the other hand, is next door to friendship—“Vicinitas, Quod ego in propinqua parte amicitiae puto.” Ter. Heaut. i. 1. 4.

²⁹ πολλοῖς δ' εἶναι φίλον κατὰ τὴν τελείαν φιλίαν οὐκ ἐνδέχεται, ὥσπερ οὐδ' ἐρᾶν πολλῶν ἅμα (ἔοικε γὰρ ὑπερβολῇ). 1158, a 10. “Non ubique ὑπερβολὴ nimium significat, sed etiam summum et perfectum alicujus rei modum. Bonitz, Index, 792, a 4.

other hand (young people chiefly), cannot see too much of one another whilst the fit is on, but it seldom lasts. On the whole the friendship of pleasure is of a higher kind than that of utility, it is more liberal and has not the commercial taint.³⁰ The good man, and he alone, is both useful and agreeable as a friend, but he can hardly form a friendship with any one who is greatly his social superior unless, indeed, the social superior is morally inferior; it is only by a relation in which one friend is in some way better than the other that a proportionate return can be made and the equality which is characteristic of friendship created.³¹

The friendships above described are, like regulative justice, founded on the assumption of equality in the persons; ³² in perfect friendships the friends are really equal, and each gets from each a return of like and equal kind; in the imperfect friendships the parties are supposed to be equal, but the return, although equal in amount is different in kind (*ἀνομοειδής*), pleasure being exchanged for the profit or the reverse.

30 *μᾶλλον γὰρ ἐν ταύταις τὸ ἐλευθέριον· ἡ δὲ διὰ τὸ χρήσιμον ἀγοραίων.* 1158, a 20.

31 *ὑπερέχοντι οὐ γίνεται ὁ τοιοῦτος [ὁ σπουδαῖος] φίλος, εἰ μὴ καὶ τῇ ἀρετῇ ὑπερέχεται· εἰ δὲ μὴ, οὐκ ἰσάζει ἀνάλογον ὑπερεχόμενος.* 1158, a 34. Rather a fine-drawn reason, and inconsistent with the distinction in the next chapter, but it follows as a consequence from the assumption of perfect reciprocity in the highest kind of friendship. Aristotle occasionally argues in the matters of human nature as if he were proving a theorem in geometry. See some of his deductions from the formulæ of justice.

32 *εἰς δ' οὖν αἱ εἰρημέναι φιλῖαι ἐν ἰσότητι· τὰ γὰρ αὐτὰ γίνεται ἀπ' ἀμφοῖν καὶ βούλονται ἀλλήλοις κτέ.* 1158, b 1.

CHAPTER 7.—But there is another variety of friendship in which one of the parties is superior (τὸ καθ' ὑπεροχήν),³³ corresponding to the semblance of justice found in despotic and parental relations, where the status of the parties is so different that true justice has no place; friendship between father and son, husband and wife, ruler and ruled are of this kind. Here an equal return is neither given nor expected, and the superior must consequently receive something either greater in amount or more valuable in kind if the benefit is to be equalised, and equality is of the essence of friendship.³⁴ The analogy of justice has been referred to, but it must be remembered that equality holds a very different place in justice and friendship. In distributive justice, where inequality of the parties is assumed, equality is arrived at by considering in the first place the merit of the parties; the amount of the return is secondary,³⁵ being, in fact, determined by their merit according to the formula $A : B :: c : d$, where A, B, are the persons and c, d, the amounts. But in friendship "how much" is the first consideration and desert the second; the formula is $c : d :: A : B$; it is the amount to be received and not the merit of the parties which is the determining factor.³⁶ Where the friends are equal, pleasure is exchanged against profit and the amount is balanced by the value of the thing exchanged, personal merit not being calculated or allowed for; where the friends are unequal and where personal

³³ 1158, b 11.

³⁴ ὅταν γὰρ κατ' ἀξίαν ἡ φίλησις γίνηται, τότε γίνεται πως ἰσότης, ὃ δὴ τῆς φιλίας εἶναι δοκεῖ. 1158, b 27.

³⁵ ἐν μὲν τοῖς δικαίοις ἴσον πρῶτως τὸ κατ' ἀξίαν, τὸ δὲ κατὰ πόσον δευτέρως. 1158, b 30.

³⁶ ἐν δὲ τῇ φιλίᾳ τὸ μὲν κατὰ πόσον πρῶτως, τὸ δὲ κατ' ἀξίαν δευτέρως. 1158, b 31.

merits must therefore come in, it may come in to the extent of making friendship impossible, and indeed of convincing the parties that it is so; ³⁷ in distributive justice where the parties are also unequal, the extent of the inequality does not destroy justice.

The line where friendship becomes impossible owing to disparity is not easily traced; enough if the principle be established.

CHAPTER 8.—Most people think it better to receive friendship than to give it—they think they gain reputation by being recipients, and flatterers pander to the feeling ³⁸ by pretending to be inferior friends. It is like the case of being honoured. Honour is sought for its incidental advantages; there are those who like to be well thought of by wealthy and powerful people, for they think they will get something out of them, others desire the good opinion of the virtuous and learned, for the connection is talked about and it confirms their own good opinion of themselves.³⁹ This view proceeds from vanity and selfishness, and is unlike friendship. Friendship consists in the active exercise of a good disposition *towards* others, and not in the passive acceptance of marks of friendship *from* others. The wholly unselfish love of mothers for their children indicates the true view of the matter. The characteristic excellence of friendship

³⁷ δῆλον δ', ἂν πολὺ διάστημα γένηται ἀρετῆς ἢ κακίας ἢ εὐπορίας ἢ τινος ἄλλου· οὐ γὰρ ἔτι φίλοι εἰσὶν ἄλλ' οὐδ' ἀξιοῦσιν. 1158, b 33.

³⁸ ὑπερεχόμενος γὰρ φίλος ὁ κόλαξ, ἢ προσποιεῖται τοιοῦτος καὶ μᾶλλον φιλεῖν ἢ φιλεῖσθαι. 1159, a 14.

³⁹ βεβαιῶσαι τὴν οἰκείαν δόξαν ἐφίενται περὶ αὐτῶν· χαίρουσι δὴ, ὅτι εἰσὶν ἀγαθοὶ πιστεύοντες τῇ τῶν λεγόντων κρίσει. 1159, a 22.

therefore consists in the active manifestation of friendly feeling, and when this is duly reciprocated an enduring friendship is the result.⁴⁰ Men of bad character are incapable of lasting friendship; regulations based on pleasure and profit continue so long as the ground of the relation lasts, but no longer.

CHAPTER 9.—With the ninth chapter commences the second and most important part of the discussion. Hitherto, friendship has been considered, defined, and its various forms distinguished, from the individual point of view, as a relation subsisting between A and B, C and D, without reference to the particular mode in which these units may happen to be associated. Aristotle now examines friendship under the conditions to which different kinds of association give rise, tracing its history from the simpler to the more complex of these associations and pointing out the differences involved in each. His final object is to determine the value of friendship as a political institution, and its bearing on the life of complete or ideal happiness.

“In every kind of association the associates or partners have something in common. This ‘common something’ so far as it extends, be it less or more, involves and requires both justice and friendship as concomitants. If the association be slight and transitory there will not be much recourse to justice, and friendship will be superficial; if intimate and lasting, as between members of one family or fellow-citizens, both justice and friendship

⁴⁰ μᾶλλον δὲ τῆς φιλίας οὔσης ἐν τῷ φιλεῖν, καὶ τῶν φιλοφίλων ἐπαινουμένων, φίλων ἀρετὴ τὸ φιλεῖν ἔοικεν, ὥστ’ ἐν οἷς τοῦτο γίνεται κατ’ ἀξίαν οὔτοι μόνιμοι φίλοι κτλ. 1159, a 33.

will be called forth in a higher degree and they will be co-extensive.⁴¹ This intimate connection between justice and friendship depends upon the fact that associations of every kind are but parts of that association or great Leviathan, the body politic; and inasmuch as the body politic was originally constituted and continues to exist, for the sake of utility, its parts, whether units or aggregates, share this general purpose and are maintained for the sake of something which ministers either to the advantages, necessities, or pleasures of life.⁴²

"Such being the end of political and other associations, both justice and friendship are necessarily called into play in them, for whenever profit or advantage is involved people will be found who try to get too much, and justice is therefore required to adjust, correct or distribute fairly. Nor will justice always suffice for the intricate questions that frequently arise: friendship, taking a broader and less technical view than justice can do, and corresponding in this respect to equity,⁴³ must be called in aid to modify or supplement equal rights. But more than this, and irrespective of any questions of law or equity, the closer and more lasting any association is the greater will be the scope afforded by it to justice and friendship. Friendship and justice are therefore co-

⁴¹ αὐξέσθαι δὲ πέφυκεν ἅμα τῇ φιλίας καὶ τὸ δίκαιον, ὥς ἐν τοῖς αὐτοῖς ὄντα καὶ ἐπ' ἴσον διήκοντα. 1160, a 7.

⁴² αἱ δὲ κοινωνίαι πᾶσαι μορίοις ἐοίκασι τῆς πολιτικῆς· συμπορεύονται γὰρ ἐπὶ τινὶ συμφέροντι, καὶ ποριζόμενοί τι τῶν εἰς τὸν βίον· καὶ ἡ πολιτικὴ δὲ κοινωνία τοῦ συμφέροντος χάριν δοκεῖ καὶ ἐξ ἀρχῆς συνελθεῖν καὶ διαμένειν. 1160, a 8. Utility, and neither "needs" nor "the good life," is here indicated as the origin and end of the state.

⁴³ καὶ τῶν δικαίων τὸ μάλιστα φιλικὸν εἶναι δοκεῖ. 1155, a 28.

extensive with associations of all kinds, and co-intensive with the strength of the bond uniting them. The objects of the political association are, however, wider than those of any of its parts; it embraces the whole of life, and not content with endeavouring to supply what is presently useful, provides relaxation and amusement as well, not forgetting to render due honour to the gods. Ancient festivals and assemblies coincided with the times of gathering in of crops; they could make thank-offerings, and moreover had leisure for meeting." 44

CHAPTER 10.—“It becomes necessary, therefore, to say something of the various forms which political union takes, for it will be found that justice and friendship are present in varying degrees in each form.

“The constitutional forms of government are three in number, standing in respect of goodness in the following order:—first comes monarchy, then aristocracy, and lastly timocracy. There are also three unconstitutional or deviation forms standing in an inverse order; first (and

44 οὐ γὰρ τοῦ παρόντος συμφέροντος ἡ πολιτικὴ ἐφίεται, ἀλλ' εἰς ἅπαντα τὸν βίον, θυσίας τε ποιοῦντες καὶ περὶ ταύτας συνόδους, τιμὰς τε ἀπονέμοντες τοῖς θεοῖς, καὶ αὐτοῖς ἀναπαύσεις πορίζοντες μεθ' ἡδονῆς. 1160, a 21. Aristotle gives in a few words the reasons for fixing the dates of religious festivals and common meetings; αἱ γὰρ ἀρχαῖαι θυσίαι καὶ σύνοδοι φαίνονται γίνεσθαι μετὰ τὰς τῶν καρπῶν συγκομιδὰς οἷον ἀπαρχαί· μάλιστα γὰρ ἐν τούτοις ἐσχόλαζον τοῖς καιροῖς. 1160, a 25. But the religious calendar of the ancient world consecrated the seasons at which field work began as well as those at which it ended. The Christian Church, wisely desiring to interfere as little as possible with the accustomed holy days, adapted its festivals to theirs.

worst) is despotism, then (less bad) oligarchy, and finally (least bad) democracy. Look at these six forms with respect to the justice contained in them. The king considers the interests of his subjects exclusively, for if he is a real king and not a titular one like the King Archon at Athens, he is under no temptation to look after his own interests, the theory of absolutism being that the monarch is self-sufficing and better furnished with all goods than any one else.⁴⁵

“In monarchy, therefore, there is something like political justice; it cannot strictly be called political justice, because, as was pointed out in the sixth chapter of the fifth book, political justice involves the notion of legal obligation,⁴⁶ and the king is under no legal obligation; he is the shepherd of his flock, as Homer called Agamemnon, and if he cares for his flock and not for himself he exhibits a quality superior to any form of political justice. Monarchy is, therefore, the best form of constitution; it follows that despotism, which is the exact contrary,⁴⁷ is the worst. The theory of despotism is that the despot may do as he likes, and he likes to manage everything for his own interest. This conduct is outside political justice, for it is outside law, but it is as much worse than any form of political injustice as monarchy is better than any form of political justice; if compared with monarchy, which is the best constitutional form, it will appear more evidently the worst than if it were compared with timocracy which

⁴⁵ οὐ γάρ ἐστι βασιλεὺς ὁ μὴ αὐτάρχης καὶ πᾶσι τοῖς ἀγαθοῖς ὑπερέχων. 1160, b 3.

⁴⁶ ἐστι γὰρ δίκαιον οἷς καὶ νόμος πρὸς αὐτούς. 1134, a 30.

⁴⁷ ἡ δὲ τυραννὶς ἐξ ἐναντίας ταύτη· τὸ γὰρ ἑαυτῷ ἀγαθὸν διώκει. 1160, b 7.

is the worst of the constitutional forms, for 'corruptio optimi pessima.'⁴⁸

"The principle of aristocracy is the rule of the best, or, to put it in another way, the rule for the best interests of the community; ⁴⁹ the deviation to oligarchy arises when merit is disregarded and the rulers assign places of profit to themselves, and magistracies are made perpetual, and all this for the purpose of enriching the ruling class. This is contrary to the first principles of political justice.

"Timocracy, the worst of the regular or constitutional forms, recognises, however imperfectly, the maxim of political justice that power should be proportionate to merit—for at all events it makes the citizens whose rateable property is the same equal.⁵⁰ Of all the unconstitutional forms democracy is the best; for it varies but little from timocracy." The manner of its variation Aristotle does not here point out.

"The household furnishes us with a parallel to the above forms of government. The relation in which a father stands to his sons is a quasi constitutional government of the monarchic type; we cannot strictly speak of justice here, because the sons, so long as they live at home, are so closely identified with their father that he can no more be unjust to them than to

⁴⁸ καὶ φανερώτερον ἐπὶ ταύτης ὅτι χειρίστη· κάκιστον δὲ τὸ ἐνάντιον τῷ βελτίστῳ. "It is more plain looking to this (*i.e.* monarchy) than to timocracy, that it is the worst." ἐπὶ = with reference to. 1160, b 8.

⁴⁹ ἡ δὲ τῶν ὀλίγων μὲν πλειόνων δ' ἐνὸς ἀριστοκρατία, ἡ διὰ τὸ τοὺς ἀρίστους ἄρχειν ἢ διὰ τὸ πρὸς τὸ ἄριστον τῇ πόλει καὶ τοῖς κοινωνοῦσιν αὐτῆς. Polit. iii. 7. 1279, a 34.

⁵⁰ ἴσοι πάντες οἱ ἐν τῷ τμήματι. 1160, b 18.

himself; ⁵¹ still he can care for them, and this is something like justice—in Persia, by the way, fathers treat their sons like slaves.⁵² The relation of master and slave is like a despotism, for the master's benefit is exclusively regarded, rightly so in this case, wrongly in the Persian example, for you expect a different principle of government when the things governed are different.⁵³

“The relation of husband and wife resembles aristocracy; the husband rules because he is the better of the two—in his own province be it understood—for he hands over to his wife the management of things which are fit for a woman to do.⁵⁴ When the husband takes everything into his own hands, this form of domestic government degenerates into oligarchy, for he does it because he wants to be master, not because he can do better than his wife.⁵⁵ When, as sometimes happens, the wife is an heiress and so has the upper hand, there is a kind of oligarchy, for it is wealth and not merit that gives her power.

“The relation of brothers to one another resembles timocracy, for they are equal, unless indeed there is great disparity of years, when fraternal friendship is

⁵¹ τὸ δὲ κτῆμα καὶ τὸ τέκνον, ἕως ἂν ᾗ πῆλικον καὶ χωρισθῇ, ὥσπερ μέρος αὐτοῦ, αὐτὸν δ' οὐδεὶς προαιρεῖται βλάπτειν. 5. 6. 1134, b 10.

⁵² ἐν Πέρσαις δ' ἡ τοῦ πατρὸς τυραννική· χρῶνται γὰρ ὡς δούλοις τοῖς υἱέσιν. 1160, b 27.

⁵³ τῶν διαφερόντων γὰρ αἱ ἀρχαὶ διάφοροι. 1160, b 31.

⁵⁴ ὅσα δὲ γυναικὶ ἀρμόζει, ἐκείνη ἀποδίδωσιν. 1160, b 34.

⁵⁵ ἀπάντων δὲ κυριεύων ὁ ἀνὴρ εἰς ὀλιγαρχίαν μεθίστησιν· παρὰ τὴν ἀξίαν γὰρ αὐτὸ ποιεῖ, καὶ οὐκ ᾗ ἀμείνων. 1160, b 35.

hardly possible; the democratic variation occurs in badly regulated households where no hand is kept on the children and every one does as he likes." ⁵⁶

CHAPTER 11.—“Of the normal or constitutional forms two, namely kingship and aristocracy, are, like distributive justice, founded on the assumption of inequality between rulers and ruled; the third or timocratic form, like regulative justice, assumes equality between the members of the state. Similarly, in family life the relations of father and son, husband and wife, are between unequals, like the forms of government which they resemble. Brothers, like their analogue the citizens of a timocratic state, stand to one another on the footing of equality. All the above constitutional forms, as also the family relations resembling them, are founded on principles of justice, and friendship is possible within the limits and to the extent of the justice they respectively contain.” ⁵⁷

“In the deviation forms of despotism, oligarchy and democracy, inasmuch as there is a wider departure from justice so there is less room for friendship; in despotism indeed as being the worst form we can hardly say there is any; in democracy as being the best there is more. Friendship assumes a common interest which certainly does not exist when the ruler is a despot who regards himself alone. Nor can there be either friendship or justice between master and slave, for the slave possesses no rights, being merely an instrument in his master’s hands. Still, the slave differs from other instruments in that, although he possesses no rights, he is capable of

⁵⁶ ἐν αἷς ἀσθενῆς ὁ ἄρχων καὶ ἐκάστῳ ἐξουσία. 1161, a 8.

⁵⁷ καθ’ ἐκάστην δὲ τῶν πολιτειῶν φιλία φαίνεται ἐφ’ ὅσον καὶ τὸ δίκαιον. 1161, a 10.

possessing them and friendship is therefore hypothetically possible." 58

CHAPTER 12.—“ Every friendship therefore implies some form of association, but we must distinguish the ties which bind members of the same family and comrades from unions of the political, tribal, and other cognate forms which appear to rest on compact of some kind. The family ties arise independently of agreement, and will all be found to depend on the natural relationship of parents and offspring. A friendship so arising is stronger than one based on compact; there is more of a personal feeling in it, and from the nature of the case it is to some extent lasting. Parents, especially mothers, love their children so soon as they are born, and children when they begin to take notice love their parents. The friendship of brothers, again, springs from their being of the same stock; individually they are distinct, but their common origin makes them in a sense the same. 59

“The friendship of cousins and other relations is derived from the same source, namely from the fact that they have a common ancestor, hence the strength of this friendship is in inverse proportion to the distance from the common ancestor. 60

58 ἡ μὲν οὖν δοῦλος, οὐκ ἔστι φιλία πρὸς αὐτόν, ἡ δ' ἀνθρωπος· δοκεῖ γὰρ εἶναι τι δίκαιον παντὶ ἀνθρώπῳ πρὸς πάντα τὸν δυνάμενον κοινωνῆσαι νόμου καὶ συνθήκης· καὶ φιλία δὴ, καθ' ὅσον ἄνθρωπος. 1161, b 5.

59 εἰς δὲ ταῦτό πῶς καὶ ἐν διηρημένοις. 1161, b 32.

60 ἀνεψιοὶ δὲ καὶ οἱ λοιποὶ συγγενεῖς ἐκ τούτων συνωκείωνται· τῷ γὰρ ἀπὸ τῶν αὐτῶν εἶναι. γίνονται δ' οἱ μὲν οἰκειότεροι οἱ δ' ἄλλοτριώτεροι τῷ σύνεγγυς ἢ πόρρω τὸν ἀρχηγὸν εἶναι. 1162, a 1.

“The friendship of husband and wife rests on other considerations; it is nature’s own bond, and in order of time is the origin of all associations, the political one included. Man is a marrying animal rather than a political animal, by so much as the home is both prior to, and more necessary than, the state.⁶¹ The natural instinct which brings men and women together has for its object the continuance of the species, and is common to all animals; in the inferior animals it is confined to that object, but in mankind the advantage of division of labour for their common benefit is also a reason for the union. It is therefore a utility friendship as well as a natural tie; it is also a friendship of pleasure. In some cases (as when both happen to be good) the pleasure may arise from the contemplation of each other’s excellences. This tends to the permanence of the friendship, moral virtue being a habit. Having children is also a bond which holds married couples together. How a man should live with his wife is a complex question which cannot be answered more definitely than by saying that it is the same question as how it is just that he should live with her.”⁶²

CHAPTER 13.—In the last two chapters of this book Aristotle examines the reason of the differences which arise between friends, and gives hints for avoiding them.

There are, as was pointed out at the beginning of the book, three kinds of friendship and two classes of friends,

⁶¹ ἄνθρωπος γὰρ τῇ φύσει συνδυαστικὸν μᾶλλον ἢ πολιτικόν, ὅσῳ πρότερον καὶ ἀναγκαιότερον οἰκία πόλεως. 1162, a 17.

⁶² τὸ δὲ πῶς βιωτέον ἀνδρὶ πρὸς γυναῖκα οὐδὲν ἕτερον φαίνεται ζητεῖσθαι ἢ πῶς δίκαιον. 1162, a 29.

and of these two classes one is between those who are or are assumed to be equal and the other between those who are unequal. In this chapter he deals with the former, and in the final chapter with the latter class.

“Now as to equals: the rules which should govern these friendships are analogous to those of regulative justice where the parties are also assumed to be equal.

“Friendship between equals may be founded on any one of the three motives of goodness, pleasure, or profit. Those who are united by the bond of goodness do not quarrel; the object of each is to get as much good as he can from his friend, and he is only too willing to give as good as he gets.⁶³

“Nor do those who unite for the sake of pleasure come to differences as a general rule, for if they like each other well enough to see much of one another, they have what they want—pleasant society. If they do not care for each other enough for this, they have the remedy in their own hands. A man looks ridiculous for quarrelling with his friend for not being agreeable when he has nothing to do but to cut him.⁶⁴

“It is in the class of utility friendships that misunderstandings mostly arise, and hence some nice questions present themselves. Friendship for profit being on a purely business footing has the incidents of a business transaction, of which one of the most common is that neither party thinks he has done as well as he ought to

⁶³ οἱ μὲν γὰρ δι' ἀρετὴν φίλοι ὄντες εὖ δρᾶν ἀλλήλους προθυμοῦνται—πρὸς τοῦτο δ' ἀμιλλωμένων οὐκ ἔστιν ἐγκλήματα οὐδὲ μάχαι. 1162, b 6.

⁶⁴ γελοῖος δ' ἂν φαίνοιτο καὶ ὁ ἐγκαλῶν τῷ μὴ τέρποντι, ἔξδὸν μὴ συνημερεύειν. 1162, b 14.

do, and complains accordingly. For instance, the arrangements between friends whose connection is of the mercenary kind are sometimes definite and sometimes rest on understanding or good feeling, like the distinction between legal and equitable obligations in law. In each case there is room for dispute. Take the case of a formal legal obligation. A lends money to his friend B, and it is agreed that he shall receive it back with interest at a fixed rate and date. There is no doubt about the terms, but the borrower thinks it would be friendly in the lender to give him time.⁶⁵

“Or take the case of a moral or equitable obligation where nothing is fixed⁶⁶:—A advances money to his friend B, on no definite terms, but A expects to get his money back either with or without interest; whilst B treats it as a gift. A will naturally complain, for he entered into the transaction (as he thought) on the footing of being paid, with or without interest, and B seeks to close it on the footing of not paying.⁶⁷ The proper course in such a case is plain; the borrower ought to pay if he can; if he cannot, the lender should not insist.⁶⁸

“Before entering into transactions of the above kind it is therefore very necessary for the person obliged to consider to what kind of man and on what terms he is putting himself under obligation, in order that he

⁶⁵ δῆλον δ' ἐν ταύτῃ τὸ ὀφείλημα κοῦκ ἀμφίλογον, φιλικὸν δὲ τὴν ἀναβολὴν ἔχει. 1162, b 28.

⁶⁶ ἡθικὴ οὐκ ἐπὶ ῥητοῖς, ἀλλ' ὥς φίλῳ δωρεῖται. 1162, b 31.

⁶⁷ κομίζεσθαι δὲ ἀξιοῖ τὸ ἴσον ἢ πλεον, ὥς οὐ δεδωκὼς ἀλλὰ χρήσας· οὐκ ὁμοίως δὲ συναλλάξας καὶ διαλυόμενος ἐγκαλέσει. 1162, b 32.

⁶⁸ καὶ ὁμολογῆσαι δ' ἂν δυνάμενος ἀποδώσειν· ἀδυνατοῦντα δ' οὐδ' ὁ διδοὺς ἡξίωσεν ἄν. 1163, a 6.

may make up his mind whether he will stand to the terms or not.⁶⁹

“The question is sometimes raised whether a benefit should be measured by the needs of the person who receives it, or by its value to the man who confers it. The receiver is apt to minimise the value—the other side to exaggerate it; the lender will say that he inconvenienced himself by what he did, that the money could not have been got elsewhere, that he had not got it by him and had to borrow it, and ran considerable risk in so doing. The true measure is to be ascertained by looking to the advantage gained by the receiving party; he is the person who has been benefited; the assistance is worth what it is worth to him, and of course he must pay an equivalent, or even more if he wishes to do the correct thing.”⁷⁰

⁶⁹ ἐν ἀρχῇ δ' ἐπισκεπτέον ὑφ' οὗ εὐεργετῆται καὶ ἐπὶ τίνι, ὅπως ἐπὶ τούτοις ὑπομένῃ ἢ μὴ. 1163, a 8.

⁷⁰ τοσαύτη οὖν γεγένηται ἡ ἐπικουρία ὅσον οὗτος ὠφέλῃται, καὶ ἀποδοτέον δὴ αὐτῷ ὅσον ἐπὶ ἡρέτο, ἢ καὶ πλέον· κάλλιον γάρ. 1163, a 19. In discussing commercial values in Book V. Chapter 5 (see page 293 *ante*) Aristotle had said that they are determined by demand, and he says here, in discussing friendly values, that they depend on the wants of the person obliged. In both cases he has omitted to notice the element of supply. The value of commodities (including money) is regulated by supply *and* demand, and the value of a friendly obligation depends on the same factors. A loan of £50 may be worth twice that sum to a poor man in pressing want, but the friend may not be in the least inconvenienced by making the advance. Neither honourable nor any other considerations require the borrower in such a case to return £100 to the man who has obliged him.

CHAPTER 14.—“Turning now to the friendship between unequals, the class in which the return is adjusted on the principles applicable to distributive justice, the differences which arise are of this kind: the superior appeals to the established rule in partnerships where the capital is contributed in unequal shares, namely that the profit received should be proportionate to the capital brought in;⁷¹ the inferior argues, not unreasonably, that a friendship by which nothing is gained is not worth having. Each, says Aristotle, is right, each ought to be a gainer by the friendship, but not of the same thing. The gain of the superior should be in the form of honour; that of the inferior in the form of assistance rendered to him.⁷² This is the rule of justice in political affairs; if a man contributes more than his share to the public interest or welfare he is publicly honoured; each side gains a different thing. The public, however, do not expect to pay in money as well as in honour, for no one stands having the worst of it all round.⁷³

“In friendship, be it noted, the rule of ‘return in proportion to merit’ cannot always be followed, as in the case where honour is rendered to the gods or to parents against benefits received; here, no return can be adequate; enough if we do what we can.”⁷⁴

⁷¹ οἴονται γὰρ, καθάπερ ἐν χρημάτων κοινωνίᾳ πλείον λαμβάνουσιν οἱ συμβαλλόμενοι πλείον, οὕτω δεῖν καὶ ἐν τῇ φιλίᾳ. 1163, a 30.

⁷² τῆς μὲν γὰρ ἀρετῆς καὶ τῆς εὐεργεσίας ἡ τιμὴ γέρας, τῆς δ’ ἐνδείας ἐπικουρία τὸ κέρδος. 1163, b 3.

⁷³ ἐν πᾶσι γὰρ τὸ ἔλαττον οὐδεὶς ὑπομένει. 1163, b 9.

⁷⁴ τὸ δυνατόν γὰρ ἡ φιλία ἐπιζητεῖ, οὐ τὸ κατ’ ἀξίαν. 1163, b 15. The same rule governs the relation of philosophical teacher and student. See 1164, b 2 and p. 14.

BOOK IX

THE ninth book is less carefully put together than the eighth, the arrangement of which shows great skill, and there is some repetition in the first chapter, although a new turn is given to the rule of "payment by results" by the reference to Protagoras and the hit at the Sophists. The questions of casuistry discussed in the second chapter are ingenious, but they have little value except to a confessor, and he will find more complete manuals elsewhere. The chief interest of the book begins with the fourth chapter, where the question between egoism and altruism is broached, to be continued in the eighth chapter, and in the criticism in the sixth chapter of the doctrine of unanimity as a political solvent and panacea.

The chapter on self-love is finely conceived and expressed; we see here (as in some other chapters of the ninth book) a side of Aristotle's character which he does not often turn to the reader. The rest of the book serves the purpose of completing the doctrine of friendship much in the way that the latter part of Book VI. completes the doctrine of prudence or the latter part of Book V. that of justice.

TEXT

CHAPTER 1.—“ The friendships in which different things are exchanged, as in the case of a wealthy patron and his satellites, or a lover and his mistress, are purely business transactions, like the exchange of commodities, and the principle of return in proportion to what is done applies to both equally. But there is an important practical difference; the tradesman or manufacturer has a fixed standard by which the value of the commodity supplied can be ascertained; friends have not. Hence there is always a liability to misunderstanding; circumstances change—the humble friend is not so useful, nor the object of affection so agreeable as before; the return of the patron or lover naturally diminishes; hence disappointment and quarrels. The same result takes place when, owing to the absence of a definite bargain, the return is not what was expected—for not to get what you want is practically equivalent to getting nothing.⁷⁵ But who ought to fix what is a fair remuneration for services rendered; the one who renders or the one who receives? Protagoras used to ask his pupils to say how much they thought his teaching worth and he would accept their estimate; but it is better, as Hesiod advises, always

⁷⁵ ὁμοιον γὰρ τὸ μηδὲν γίνεσθαι, ὅταν οὗ ἐφίεται μὴ τυγχάνη. 1164, a 14.

to have things down in black and white.⁷⁶ Teachers who, like the Sophists, insist on being paid in advance, (probably because no one who had attended their lectures would think of paying afterwards), and then do not fulfil their promises, are deservedly complained of;⁷⁷ but if a man puts down his money of his own accord he can say nothing. Knowledge, however, is a precious commodity and not to be measured by money; let the learner pay what he can. In cases which do not fall within this rule, but where some return is due and is expected, both justice and necessity require that the receiver should fix it.⁷⁸ This is the rule even in an ordinary contract of sale where the price is not fixed, and in some countries when the amount is disputed such contracts cannot be enforced, upon the principle that if you choose to trust a man you must take the consequences.⁷⁹ As a general rule, those who have a

⁷⁶ ἐν τοῖς τοιοῦτοις δ' ἐνίοις ἀρέσκει τὸ "μισθὸς δ' ἀνδρί." 1164, a 26.

⁷⁷ οἱ δὲ προλαμβάνοντες τὸ ἀργύριον, εἴτα μηδὲν ποιοῦντες ὦν ἔφασαν εἰκότως ἐν ἐγκλήμασι γίνονται,—τοῦτο δ' ἴσως ποιεῖν οἱ σοφισταὶ ἀναγκάζονται διὰ τὸ μηδένα ἂν δοῦναι ἀργύριον ὦν ἐπίστανται. 1164, a 27. 29.

⁷⁸ 1164, b 6.

⁷⁹ ἐνιαχοῦ τ' εἰςὶ νόμοι τῶν ἐκουσίων συμβολαίων δίκας μὴ εἶναι, ὥς δέον, ᾧ ἐπίστευσε, διαλυθῆναι πρὸς τοῦτον καθάπερ ἐκοινώνησεν. 1164, b 13. The voluntary transactions which Aristotle here tells us were not enforceable by action in some places are defined in 5. 2. 1131, a 3 as contracts of purchase and sale, loan, pledge, hire of goods, deposit and hire of service. It is at first sight difficult to suppose that in any society other than the most primitive, there should have been no machinery for enforcing such contracts as these where the price was not fixed beforehand,

thing and those who want it value it very differently, but it is the buyer's estimate which must prevail both as a matter of business and of fair dealing; the estimate should, however, be made before and not after the buyer has got what he wants."

CHAPTER 2.—"How far a man's duty to his father or his friend ought to lead him, whether affection or efficiency, justice or friendship should prevail, may be made a question. Aristotle lays down some general rules: 'Be just before you are generous,'⁸⁰ 'Blood is thicker than water.' When questions arise between

for in many cases it is impossible to so fix it. But we must remember that the sanction of religion was then frequently invoked with effect where no one now would think of appealing to it. Many a Greek firmly believed

"haud impunitum quondam fore, si dubitaret
depositum retinere,"

and reliance on this belief among a highly superstitious people, as the Greeks were and are, was in practice probably as effective, and certainly less expensive, than an action at law. Then we should not forget that there are many contractual obligations which even in our own country and times are not enforceable, such as gaming or wagering contracts, or contracts entered into for purposes which are considered to be against public policy or morals. Debts irrecoverable by legal process are debts of honour, and debts of honour are quite as often paid as any other kinds of debts.

⁸⁰ τὰς μὲν εὐεργεσίας ἀνταποδοτέον ὥς ἐπὶ τὸ πᾶν μᾶλλον ἢ χαριστείον ἑταίροις. 1164, b 31.

your relatives, clansmen and fellow-citizens and other people, the relationship, moral worth or the fact of the benefit should enter as an element, but not as a determinant, into your conduct.⁸¹

"But these general rules are subject to exceptions arising either from questions of degree, moral duty, or the necessities of the case,⁸² and all that can be said is to repeat the warning so often before given that reasonings in matters of conduct can never be more definite than their subject matter."⁸³

The examples given by Aristotle of the difficulties arising in the application of this general rule are dialectical and ingenious; some are taken from Plato, and we can well imagine that they were discussed in the schools with as much relish and to as little purpose as in a modern debating society. The following is an example:—A has been ransomed from brigands by B, who is a mere acquaintance or stranger; A's father happens also to have been carried off by brigands; B is at large. Ought A to ransom his father, or to repay B, it being assumed that he cannot do both? The answer adjudged correct is that he should ransom his father.⁸⁴

Again; sometimes a benefit rendered should not be

⁸¹ καὶ συγγενέσι δὲ καὶ φυλέταις καὶ πολίταις καὶ τοῖς λοιποῖς ᾗσιν αἰεὶ πειρατέον τὸ οἰκεῖον ἀπονέμειν, καὶ συγκρίνειν τὰ ἐκάστοις ὑπάρχοντα κατ' οἰκειότητα καὶ ἀρετὴν ἢ χρῆσιν. 1165, a 30.

⁸² πολλὰς καὶ παντοίας ἔχει διαφορὰς καὶ μεγέθει καὶ μικρότητι καὶ τῷ καλῷ καὶ ἀναγκαίῳ. 1164, b 28.

⁸³ ὅπερ οὖν πολλάκις εἴρηται, οἱ περὶ τὰ πάθη καὶ πράξεις λόγοι ὁμοίως ἔχουσι τὸ ὁρισμένον τοῖς περὶ ᾗ εἰσιν. 1165, a 12.

⁸⁴ 1165, a 1.

returned, as when A, knowing B to be an honourable man, recommends him for an appointment or renders him some similar service; B has reason to suppose A to be a bad character; in that case B should not return the service rendered. On a like principle it is sometimes justifiable not to lend money to a man who has obliged you with a loan, for the latter may have been pretty sure you would pay; but you may have good reason to doubt whether you will get your money back, you are therefore not dealing on equal terms.⁸⁵

These questions and others of the same kind furnish a useful exercise in mental gymnastics, and help to bring home the variety and complexity of the motives which bear upon conduct, but in practice they must be settled, not by books or rules, but by each one's own sense, with the assistance, if need be, of a judicious friend.

CHAPTER 3.—“Coming to matters more immediately connected with friendship, we may ask in what cases are we justified in ceasing to be friends where circumstances have changed or our friends are no longer the same? When pleasure or profit is the avowed or understood reason of the relationship and the reason ceases, it is natural enough that there should be a break, but sometimes there is a misunderstanding; you make friends with a man because you think he will be agreeable or useful, he on the other hand imagines you admire him for his character: the question here is, who made the mistake? If you have led him to believe that your friendship was due to an appreciation of his moral qualities, and then you drop him because he is not amusing, he may well complain. But if he is self-

⁸⁵ ὁ μὲν γὰρ οἰόμενος κομιεῖσθαι ἐδάνεισεν ἐπιεικεῖ ὄντι, ὃ δ' οὐκ ἐλπίζει κομιεῖσθαι παρὰ πονηροῦ. 1165, a 8.

deceived he must blame himself.”⁸⁶ Such cases constantly arise; nothing is more common than for men (we may add “and women”) to misunderstand the reasons for which their society is sought. “A different case may arise; you make friends with a person believing him to be good; he turns out badly and you cannot help seeing it; ⁸⁷ are you to continue your friendship? You cannot, it would be wrong; but it does not follow that you should break with him at once—at least not in all cases. If you have reason to think that by continuing your friendship you can reclaim him, it is your duty to do so. Any marked change of character, to speak generally, justifies the dissolution of a friendship. Sometimes the change is relative and not absolute, as may be seen in the case of boyish friendships. Originally there was a complete sympathy of tastes and pursuits, and the two boys were close friends. But one of them develops into a superior man and the other remains where he originally was, a child in mind; ⁸⁸ how can they continue to be friends? their tastes differ, they are not in sympathy even in character; they could not live together, which as has been said is the test of friendship. Their friendship must cease; still they owe one another something and must concede something for the sake of the old friendship; they can never be quite strangers.”⁸⁹

⁸⁶ ὅταν μὲν οὖν διαφενσθῇ τις καὶ ὑπολάβῃ φιλεῖσθαι διὰ τὸ ἡθος, μηδὲν τοιοῦτον ἐκείνου πράττοντος, ἑαυτὸν αἰτιῶντ’ ἄν. 1165, b 8.

⁸⁷ γένηται δὲ μοχθηρὸς καὶ δοκῇ—1165, b 13.

⁸⁸ εἰ δὲ μὲν διαμένει τὴν διανοίαν πᾶς, ὁ δ’ ἀνὴρ εἴη οἷος κράτιστος. 1165, b 26.

⁸⁹ τοῖς γενομένοις ἀπονεμητέον τι διὰ τὴν προγενομένην φιλίαν. 1165, b 34.

CHAPTER 4.—We now come to the psychology of the subject. If we ask what are the marks of friendship, we find various points insisted upon. “Some define a friend as (1) one who desires good things, or what he imagines to be such, for his friend for that friend’s sake, and who carries his desire into act;⁹⁰ others say (2) that he will wish his friend to live, wishing it disinterestedly, for the friend’s sake and not his own,⁹¹ as mothers do for their children; others again point out (3) that friends must have common tastes and wish to live together;⁹² lastly, (4) sympathy is insisted upon⁹³—a very characteristic mark of a mother’s feeling. Now every one of these marks are found in the relation in which a man—a good man, of course, for he is always the test—stands towards himself. Such a man desires (1) what is good and what he conceives to be good for his own sake, and acts accordingly—in saying ‘for himself,’ his real self, or highest function, his reason is meant;⁹⁴ the good man desires also (2) that he should continue to live, and especially that his intellectual faculties should be preserved;⁹⁵ then, (3) a good man is completely and entirely at one with himself and is his own best companion; he has pleasant memories

⁹⁰ *τιθέασι τὸν φίλον τὸν βουλόμενον καὶ πράττοντα τὰγαθὰ ἢ τὰ φαινόμενα ἐκείνου ἕνεκα.* 1166, a 3.

⁹¹ *ἢ τὸν βουλόμενον εἶναι καὶ ζῆν τὸν φίλον αὐτοῦ χάριν.* 1166, a 4.

⁹² *τὸν συνδιάγοντα καὶ ταῦτὰ αἰρούμενον.* 1166, a 7.

⁹³ *τὸν συνάλογοντα καὶ συγχαίροντα τῷ φίλῳ.* 1166, a 7.

⁹⁴ *βούλεται δὲ ἑαυτῷ τὰγαθὰ καὶ τὰ φαινόμενα καὶ πράττει (τοῦ γὰρ ἀγαθοῦ τὰγαθὸν διαπονεῖν) καὶ ἑαυτοῦ ἕνεκα (τοῦ γὰρ διανοητικοῦ χάριν, ὅπερ ἕκαστος εἶναι δοκεῖ).* 1166, a 14.

⁹⁵ *ζῆν δὲ βούλεται ἑαυτὸν καὶ μάλιστα τούτῳ ᾧ φρόνει.* 1166, a 17.

of the past, happy hopes for the future, and a storehouse of elevated thoughts for the present; ⁹⁶ lastly, (4) the sympathy so characteristic of friendship is a very special attribute of the good man in his relation to himself, for he is never at odds, the same things always please and displease him and he has no regrets.⁹⁷ Now it is just because the good man has these personal and distinctive attributes, and because a friend is only another self, that friendship itself is defined by the marks above enumerated, and that friendship in its highest form⁹⁸ is considered to be a copy of a good man's feelings towards himself; we may say that such a man's relations to his neighbour 'proceed from,' as well as that they are 'defined by,' his relation to himself.⁹⁹ It is sometimes considered that this is true, not only of the standard good man but of the inferior natures who constitute the majority of mankind, although no one supposes it true of the wholly bad. But we cannot agree that it is true even of the inferior majority, for they possess none of the joint attributes of the good man and the good friend. In the first place, instead of desiring for themselves what appears good they choose pleasures which they know to be bad; ¹⁰⁰ next, so far from desiring to live, they often fly from life and

⁹⁶ συνδιάγειν τε ὁ τοιοῦτος ἑαυτῷ βούλεται· ἡδέως γὰρ αὐτὸ ποιεῖ· τῶν τε γὰρ πεπραγμένων ἐπιτερπεῖς αἱ μνήμαι, καὶ τῶν μελλόντων ἐλπίδες ἀγαθαί—καὶ θεωρημάτων δ' εὐπορεῖ τῇ διανοίᾳ. 1166, a 23.

⁹⁷ συναλγεῖ τε καὶ συνήδεται μάλιστα ἑαυτῷ. 1166, a 27.

⁹⁸ ἡ ὑπερβολὴ τῆς φιλίας τῇ πρὸς αὐτὸν ὁμοιοῦται. 1166, b 1. ὑπερβολή="the highest form." Bonitz, Index, s.v.

⁹⁹ τὰ φιλικὰ δὲ τὰ πρὸς τοὺς πέλας καὶ οἷς αἱ φίλαι ὀρίζονται ἔοικεν ἐκ τῶν πρὸς ἑαυτὸν ἐλελυθῆναι. 1166, a 1.

¹⁰⁰ αἰροῦνται γὰρ ἀντὶ τῶν δοκούντων ἑαυτοῖς ἀγαθῶν εἶναι τὰ ἡδέα βλαβερά ὄντα. 1166, b 8.

commit suicide; ¹⁰¹ nor can they bear their own company, for when they are alone, so far from enjoying pleasing hopes and memories they think of the evils which have happened to them, and expect them to happen again; they therefore seek companionship in order to forget; ¹⁰² moreover, their nature is in a state of revolution—they are at variance with themselves, one part of them is grieved because something is wanting, another part is happy because it is present—they pull different ways, as if they would tear asunder.¹⁰³

“Lower natures, therefore, cannot be friendly either to themselves or to others. This is a truly pitiable condition, and it should warn us to shun evil and try with all our might to be good in order that we may be friends both to ourselves and others.” ¹⁰⁴

This is an excellent chapter both in thought and expression, although the argument requires some rearrangement in order to do full justice to it. Aristotle had Plato's Republic, and particularly the ninth book, in his mind when he wrote it, and here and there, and noticeably in the last sentences, some of the fervour of

¹⁰¹ φεύγουσι τὸ ζῆν καὶ ἀναιροῦσιν ἑαυτούς. 1166, b 13.

¹⁰² ἀναμνησκονται γὰρ πολλῶν καὶ δυσχερῶν, καὶ τοιαῦθ' ἕτερα ἐλπίζουσι, καθ' ἑαυτοὺς ὄντες, μεθ' ἑτέρων δ' ὄντες ἐπιλανθάνονται. 1166, b 15.

¹⁰³ στασιάζει γὰρ αὐτῶν ἡ ψυχὴ, καὶ τὸ μὲν διὰ μοχθηρίαν ἀλγεί ἀπεχόμενόν τινων, τὸ δ' ἡδεται, καὶ τὸ μὲν δεῦρο τὸ δ' ἐκείσε ἔλκει ὥσπερ διασπῶντα. 1166, b 19.

¹⁰⁴ εἰ δὴ τὸ οὕτως ἔχειν λίαν ἐστὶν ἄθλιον, φευκτέον τὴν μοχθηρίαν διατεταμένως καὶ πειρατέον ἐπιεικῇ εἶναι· οὕτω γὰρ καὶ πρὸς ἑαυτὸν φιλικῶς ἂν ἔχοι καὶ ἑτέρῳ φίλος γένοιτο. 1166, b 26.

the Platonic Sokrates may be recognised. He assumes, for the purpose of working out his parallel, a soul divided into parts and the consequent possibility of a man contending with himself, not literally but by way of metaphorical illustration. It will be remembered that in discussing the question whether a man can be unjust to himself, in Book V. Chapter 11, the same assumption was made and with the same limitation (*κατὰ μεταφορὰν δὲ καὶ ὁμοιότητα ἔστιν οὐκ αὐτῷ πρὸς αὐτὸν δίκαιον ἀλλὰ τῶν αὐτοῦ τισίν.* 1138, b 5). Aristotle did not admit as a psycholological fact that there were parts of the soul capable, as independent agencies, of warring with one another, or acting justly or unjustly towards one another, but for the purpose of illustration the metaphor is useful. In this chapter Aristotle makes reason the true and only self.¹⁰⁵

The argument comes to this, that love for one's neighbour is based on a rational self-love, or as Aristotle more strongly expresses it, is derived from it; in order to love your neighbour you must first love yourself: he assumes that self-love is prior both in order of time and of importance to love for others. Butler, in his sermon on Benevolence, takes the same view. Commenting on the text, "Love your neighbour as yourself," he says, "If the words 'as thyself' are to be understood of an equality of affection, it would not be attended with those consequences which perhaps may be thought to follow from it. Suppose a person to have the same settled regard to others as to himself—that in any deliberate scheme or pursuit he took their interests into the account in the same degree as his own, so far as equality of affection

¹⁰⁵ [τὸ διανοητικόν] ὅπερ ἕκαστος εἶναι δοκεῖ. 1166, a 17; cf. x. 7. 1178, a 5. τὸ γὰρ οἰκεῖον ἐκάστῳ τῇ φύσει κράτιστον καὶ ἡδιστόν ἐστιν ἐκάστῳ· καὶ ἀνθρώπῳ δὴ ὁ κατὰ τὸν νοῦν βίος, εἴπερ τοῦτο μάλιστα ἀνθρώπος.

would produce this—yet he would in fact, and ought to be, much more taken up and employed about himself and his own concerns than about others and their interests. Both our nature and condition in this world require that each particular man should make particular provision for himself, and the inquiry what proportion benevolence should have to self-love when brought down to practice will be, what is a competent care and provision for ourselves? ” ¹⁰⁶

Aristotle's argument starts from a different point and pursues a course different from Butler's, but its result is the same. To live and seek our own good (as Butler puts it, “to be taken up about ourselves and our own concerns”) is, says Aristotle, a condition precedent to desiring and compassing the good of others; our duty to our neighbour is a copy of our duty to ourselves, and the less fully we live our own life the less completely will our duties to others be discharged.

CHAPTER 5.—Aristotle now breaks off from the line of thought he had been pursuing in order to complete his analysis of benevolence or well-wishing.¹⁰⁷ He had already distinguished it from friendship, by observing that the feeling may exist between two people without the knowledge of either; here he distinguishes it from fondness or affection.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁶ Butler, Serm. ii. 156.

¹⁰⁷ 1155, b 31 sqq.

¹⁰⁸ The word *φίλησις* is used by Aristotle in the *Ethics* in various senses; it is a feeling (*πάθει ἔουικεν*. 1157, b 28) an action (*ποιήσῃ* [= *πράξει*] *ἔουικεν*. 1168, a 19); it has intensity and desire, and requires an acquaintanceship of some duration (1166, b 33); it is not merely wishing well to a person (1166, b 32) nor being a friend to him

This is not irrelevant, for if well-wishing does not rise to the level of fondness, which is a feeling inferior to friendship, *a fortiori* it cannot be friendship. "Now in saying that you are fond of any one you imply an intensity of feeling which does not enter into the conception of benevolence;¹⁰⁹ more than this, fondness requires that you should appreciate a person's character, which takes time, and that you should be ready to act with him; but you may become well-disposed to a person suddenly, as to an athlete whose prowess you admire, though you would not choose him as an associate or care to join him in a contest. Well-wishing is, in fact, a sudden and superficial liking.¹¹⁰ It may be called, metaphorically speaking, 'an idle friendship,' but with time and acquaintanceship it is capable of ripening into real friendship;¹¹¹ real friendship, observe, and not that which is based on grounds of pleasure or profit—motives

(1157, b 28). But it is also used in another sense, for we are said to have it of lifeless objects, as of wine (1155, b 28), and it is co-extensive with all the three grounds of friendship (τὰ φιλητά. 1156, a 6). All these various senses are found in our own language. We say that a man is fond of good wine; that he is fond of pleasure, fond of being useful or of doing good; we distinguish being fond of a person from being in love, but the word implies feeling and even strong feeling. Fondness is the nearest English equivalent of φίλησις.

¹⁰⁹ οὐ γὰρ ἔχει [ἡ εὐνοία] διάτασιν οὐδ' ὄρεξιν, τῇ φιλήσει δὲ ταῦτ' ἀκολουθεῖ. 1166, b 33.

¹¹⁰ προσπαίως εὖνοι γίνονται καὶ ἐπιπολαίως στέργουσιν. 1167, a 2.

¹¹¹ μεταφέρων φαίη τις ἂν αὐτὴν ἀργὴν εἶναι φιλίαν, χρονίζομένην δὲ καὶ εἰς συνήθειαν ἀφικουμένην γίνεσθαι φιλίαν. 1167, a 10.

with which well-wishing has no concern. To speak generally, then, benevolence or well-wishing is grounded on certain good qualities of a man, on his beauty of person or character, or his courage, as in the case of athletes." ¹¹² In the course of this chapter Aristotle makes an observation by the way which is true and worth repeating. "Love," he says, "like friendship, begins in the pleasure derived from sight; you cannot be in love unless you have been first attracted by personal beauty" (he might have said "or what you consider to be such"), "and the test of being in love is longing for the absent object and desiring its company." ¹¹³

CHAPTER 6.—"To be of one mind with a person (*ὁμόνοια*) is a mark of friendship, but this does not mean agreeing with him in opinion (*ὁμοδοξία*) on any subject that may be named; two astronomers, for instance, may agree on a question relating to the stars, but this is no mark of friendship. The agreement must be on something relating to life, to matters of conduct, matters, too, of importance, and in which each side has an interest." ¹¹⁴ Such an agreement is found between really good men who are at one both with themselves and others, being, so to speak, on the same plane; ¹¹⁵ such men will agree in what is right and expedient, and they will endeavour to

¹¹² ὅλως δ' εὖνοια δι' ἀρετὴν καὶ ἐπιείκειάν τινα γίνεται, ὅταν τῷ φανῇ καλός τις ἢ ἀνδρεῖος ἢ τι τοιοῦτον καθάπερ καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν ἀγωνιστῶν εἶπομεν. 1167, a 18.

¹¹³ μὴ γὰρ προησθεις τῇ ἰδέᾳ οὐδεὶς ἐρᾷ, ὁ δὲ χαίρων τῷ εἶδει οὐδὲν μᾶλλον ἐρᾷ, ἀλλ' ὅταν καὶ ἀπόντα ποθῇ καὶ τῆς παρουσίας ἐπιθυμῇ. 1167, a 6.

¹¹⁴ περὶ τὰ πρακτά—τὰ εἰς τὸν βίον ἥκοντα—τὰ ἐν μεγέθει καὶ ἐνδοχόμενα ἀμφοῖν ὑπάρχειν ἢ πᾶσιν. 1167, a 28—b 4.

¹¹⁵ ἐπὶ τῶν αὐτῶν ὄντες, ὥς εἰπεῖν. 1167, b 6.

join in doing it. Inferior natures cannot agree except to a small extent; "each tries to get more than his share of advantage and less than his share of trouble and expense, in these matters studying his own interest and looking sharply after his neighbour and hindering him; if they are not on the watch the common interest suffers."¹¹⁶

"Agreement of opinion has been called political friendship, and so it is, but with the reservation already made."¹¹⁷ It is not enough that the members of a state should agree—they must agree on practical and important matters affecting the community at large, and they must be prepared to give effect to their opinion; ¹¹⁸ as for example, if it should happen to be a question whether magistracies are to be elective or not, or whether an offensive alliance is to be contracted with another state. But when Eteoclês and Polyneikês in the Phœnissæ agreed that there should be a despotism, but quarrelled who the despot should be, that is only a half agreement; they agree to the same thing but not to the same person; it is not political friendship.¹¹⁹ But an agreement between the people and the better classes that there should be an aristocracy satisfies all the conditions—it is complete, it affects everybody and is on a subject of high political concern."

¹¹⁶ *ἑαυτῷ δ' ἕκαστος βουλόμενος ταῦτα [τὰ ὠφέλιμα] τὸν πέλας ἐξετάζει καὶ κωλύει· μὴ γὰρ τηρούντων τὸ κοινὸν ἀπόλυνται.* 1167, b 13. The idea is that of a partnership where the partners cannot trust one another.

¹¹⁷ *πολιτικὴ δὴ φιλία φαίνεται ἢ ὁμόνοια, καθάπερ καὶ λέγεται.* 1167, b 2.

¹¹⁸ 1167, a 26.

¹¹⁹ *ὅταν δ' ἑκάτερος ἑαυτὸν βούληται, ὥσπερ οἱ ἐν ταῖς Φοινίσσαις, στασιάζουσιν· οὐ γάρ ἐστιν ὁμονοεῖν τὸ αὐτὸ ἑκάτερον ἐννοεῖν ὁδῆποτε, ἀλλὰ τὸ ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ.* 1167, a 32.

In this chapter Aristotle dissociates himself from the views of the Platonic Sokrates in the Republic on the political value of unanimity. It is laid down in that dialogue, with great emphasis, that "if in any political community people can be got to agree in opinion on matters of property—if they can be brought to say 'mine' and 'not mine' with regard to the same things at the same time, such a political community may be considered to be managed in the best way."¹²⁰ Aristotle maintains that such unanimity is not enough; it does not cover a sufficiently wide field; important as questions of property undoubtedly are, there are matters more important still and of more general interest to the community.

CHAPTER 7.—"It is strange, but nevertheless true, that those who confer benefits are usually more friendly to those whom they oblige than the recipients are to their benefactors. Most people account for this by the analogy of debtor and creditor, and they say that just as creditors have an interest in their debtor's safety, whilst debtors desire non-existence for their creditors,¹²¹ so benefactors are anxious that those whom they have obliged should

¹²⁰ ἐν ᾗτινι πόλει πλεῖστοι ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ κατὰ ταῦτὰ λέγουσι τὸ "ἐμόν" καὶ τὸ "οὐκ ἐμόν," αὕτη ἄριστα διοικεῖται. Plato, Repub. 462 C.

¹²¹ βούλονται μὴ εἶναι οἷς ὀφείλουσιν. 1167, b 21; i.e., debtors wish their creditors "not to be"; creditors, on the other hand, wish their debtors not only to be, but also to be well. The whole passage reads thus: καθάπερ οὖν ἐπὶ τῶν δανείων οἱ μὲν ὀφείλοντες βούλονται μὴ εἶναι οἷς ὀφείλουσιν, οἱ δὲ δανείσαντες καὶ ἐπιμελοῦνται τῆς τῶν ὀφειλόντων σωτηρίας, οὕτω καὶ τοὺς εὐεργετήσαντας βούλεσθαι εἶναι τοὺς παθόντας ὡς κομιουμένους τὰς χάριτας, τοῖς δ' οὐκ εἶναι ἐπιμελὲς τὸ ἀνταποδοῦναι. 1167, b 20.

not only exist, but also be safe and sound, as this would give them a better chance of getting some favour in exchange; the obligees, on the contrary, have no interest in making any return, and therefore no wish that those should live who might claim it."

"Epicharmus would probably say that this is to look at the matter in a bad light, but it is human nature all the same, for the generality of mankind are apt to forget, and to prefer getting to giving.¹²² The real reason lies deeper; the illustration of debtor and creditor is misleading, for creditors do not care about their debtors as such—their interest in them is only for what they expect to obtain, whereas the feeling of a benefactor is pure affection; he likes those whom he has benefited, even if he thinks that nothing will ever come of it. The real analogy is that of a workman and his work; every one likes his own works better than his works would like him, if they were capable of feeling. Look at the poets and the absurd affection they have for their productions;¹²³ they love them as if they were their children. The case of a benefactor is precisely similar; the benefit he has conferred is his work: he likes it better than his work likes him.¹²⁴ The reason of this curious preference is that "every one desires life, that life is activity and that man is in a sense identified with the results of his activities; loving life, he therefore loves that which his activity produces—in other words, his

¹²² Ἐπίχαρμος μὲν οὖν τάχ' ἂν φαίη ταῦτα λέγειν αὐτοὺς ἐκ πονηροῦ θεωμένους, ἔοικε δὲ ἀνθρωπικῶ· ἀμνήμονες γὰρ οἱ πολλοί, καὶ μᾶλλον εὖ πάσχειν ἢ ποιεῖν ἐφίενται. 1167, b 25.

¹²³ ὑπεραγαπῶσι γὰρ οὗτοι τὰ οἰκεῖα ποιήματα. 1168, a 1.

¹²⁴ τὸ γὰρ εὖ πεπονθὸς ἔργον ἐστὶν αὐτῶν· τοῦτο δὲ ἀγαπῶσι μᾶλλον ἢ τὸ ἔργον τὸν ποιήσαντα. 1168, a 3.

work. And this is in accordance with the course of nature; what is meant by 'a work' is a 'potentiality realised.'¹²⁵ Add to this that a benefactor's actions have a beauty which gives him pleasure, whereas the person benefited sees no beauty in what is done for him; if he sees anything at all it is profit. Now good works are lasting, whereas that which is merely profitable soon passes away; the remembrance, too, of what is morally good gives pleasure, which cannot be said, or not to the same extent, of what is profitable. Lastly, every one prizes that which it has given them trouble to get, as is testified by the case of those who make their money as compared with those who inherit it, and by the case of mothers who love their children more than their fathers do, for their birth has cost them more and they are more sure that they are their own; this is also true of benefactors."¹²⁶

CHAPTER 8.—"A question has been raised as to self-love. Ought a man to love himself more than his neighbour? People blame those who do so and call them selfish as a term of reproach, and in fact a bad man always acts with himself in view and the worse he is the more he

¹²⁵ τούτου δ' αἴτιον ὅτι τὸ εἶναι πᾶσιν αἰρετὸν καὶ φιλητόν, ἔσμεν δ' ἐνεργεῖα (τῷ ζῆν γὰρ καὶ πράττειν), ἐνεργεῖα δὲ ὁ ποιήσας τὸ ἔργον ἔστι πως· στέργει δὴ τὸ ἔργον, διότι καὶ τὸ εἶναι· τοῦτο δὲ φυσικόν· ὁ γὰρ ἔστι δυνάμει, τοῦτο ἐνεργεῖα τὸ ἔργον μνηύει. ἅμα δὲ καὶ τῷ μὲν εὐεργέτη καλὸν τὸ κατὰ τὴν πράξιν, ὥστε χαίρειν ἐν ᾧ τοῦτο, τῷ δὲ παθόντι οὐδὲν καλὸν ἐν τῷ δράσαντι, ἀλλ' εἴπερ συμφέρον. 1168, a 5.

¹²⁶ The view that it gives a man more pleasure to confer a benefit than to receive one is very well and amusingly illustrated in Labiche's excellent comedy "Le voyage de M. Perrichon."

does it, and for this reason he is adversely criticised as being one who does nothing unselfishly.¹²⁷ As to the point in question, it is urged on one hand that a good man acts for the sake of what is right and this in proportion to his goodness, putting himself aside and looking to his friends. It is said, on the other hand, that you should most greatly love your greatest friend, that the greatest friend is the one who desires the good of the object of his affection for that object's mere sake, even if no one should know it, and that this is just what a man does for himself; for that, as has been shown, all friendly feeling towards others have a self-regarding origin,¹²⁸ and that the proverbs in common use prove it. Observed facts do not square with these opposite statements, naturally enough. No wonder, then, that it is a question which argument should prevail, as there is evidence on both sides.¹²⁹ Perhaps the matter may be cleared up if we consider in what sense each side uses the word 'selfish.' Those who use it in a bad sense mean that a man gives himself the larger share of wealth, honour, and bodily pleasure, these being the usual objects of desire and the things that men contend for.¹³⁰ But those who are grasping about things such as these are vulgarly gratifying the irrational side of their nature, and are justly blamed as selfish. That this is what is popularly meant by selfishness is plain, for were a man always and seriously to try to be just, temperate, and in other respects to conduct himself well; were he always to endeavour to get for himself things

¹²⁷ ὅτι οὐδὲν ἀφ' ἑαυτοῦ πράττει. 1168, a 33.

¹²⁸ εἴρηται γὰρ ὅτι ἀπ' αὐτοῦ πάντα τὰ φιλικὰ καὶ πρὸς τοὺς ἄλλους διήκει. 1168, b 5.

¹²⁹ ἀπορεῖται δὴ εἰκότως ποτέροις χρεῶν ἔπεισθαι, ἀμφοῖν ἐχόντων τὸ πιστόν. 1168, b 11.

¹³⁰ τὰ περιμάχητα. 1168, b 19.

really good, no one would think of calling him selfish.¹³¹ But such a man is in fact more selfish than the other, for he is apportioning to himself the very best; he is gratifying the highest part of his nature and subordinating himself wholly to it. Now just as in a state or any other whole made up of parts the highest or governing part really constitutes that state or whole, so in man:¹³² if any one therefore seeks to gratify his governing part, he is gratifying himself and is therefore selfish, but selfish in a very different sense from that which is blamed; differing to the whole extent that living according to reason differs from living according to passion, and that desiring what is right differs from desiring what is merely expedient. It follows that those who are earnest in doing what is right win universal acceptance and praise; for if every one acted so, then public life would be as it ought to be, and in private life too each one would get the greatest good, if it be true that good conduct has the incidents claimed for it.¹³³ The good man therefore ought to be selfish, for he will advantage both himself and others; not so the bad man, for he will injure himself as well as his neighbour.¹³⁴ All practical intelligence chooses what is

¹³¹ ἀεὶ τὸ καλὸν ἑαυτῷ περιποιῶτο. 1168, b 27.

¹³² ὥσπερ δὲ καὶ πόλις τὸ κυρίωτατον μάλιστ' εἶναι δοκεῖ καὶ πᾶν ἄλλο σύστημα, οὕτω καὶ ἄνθρωπος. 1168, b 31. Aristotle identifies the excellence of any "system" or organic compound with the excellence of its leading or specially distinctive, part—το κυρίωτατον, τὸ γὰρ οἰκίον ἐκάστω τῇ φύσει κράτιστόν ἐστιν ἐκάστω. 1178, a 5.

¹³³ τῶν ἐν τῷ βίῳ καλῶν καγαθῶν οἱ πράττοντες ὁρθῶς ἐπήβολοι γίνονται. 1099, a 5.

¹³⁴ ὥστε τὸν μὲν ἀγαθὸν δεῖ φίλαυτον εἶναι (καὶ γὰρ αὐτὸς ὀνήσεται τὰ καλὰ πράττων, καὶ τοὺς ἄλλους ὠφελήσει), τὸν δὲ μοχθηρὸν οὐ δεῖ. 1169, a 11.

best for its possessor, and the good man obeys such intelligence.¹³⁵ Of the really good man it may be said with truth that there are many things which he will do for his friends and country, even should he die in doing them: he will abandon wealth and honour and all the goods that men contend for, in order to win for himself that which is really worth having;¹³⁶ he will prefer intense pleasure for a short time to moderate enjoyment long protracted, and would sooner perform one conspicuously good deed than many small ones. And this is true of those who die for others: they choose for themselves a single great good. Such men are ready to lavish their wealth in order that their friends may receive more—their friend has the material benefit but they have the real one, they therefore give themselves the greater of the two goods. So as to honours and offices; the man we are speaking of will give up everything to his friend; he may possibly even yield to him the opportunity of doing good actions on the ground that it is better to be the cause of a friend's good deeds than to be himself the doer of them.¹³⁷ This is the sense in which a man ought to be selfish; in the ordinary sense he should not be so."

CHAPTER 9.—"It is questioned whether the happy man wants friends or not; it is said that as he is self-sufficing they will be useless; it is urged against this that it is

¹³⁵ πᾶς γὰρ νοῦς αἰρεῖται τὸ βέλτιστον ἑαυτῷ, ὃ δ' ἐπεικὴς πεῖθαρχει τῷ νῷ. 1169, a 17.

¹³⁶ προήσεται τὰ χρήματα καὶ τιμὰς καὶ ὅλως τὰ περιμάχητα ἀγαθὰ, περιποιούμενος ἑαυτῷ τὸ καλόν. 1169, a 20.

¹³⁷ ἐνδεχεται δὲ καὶ πράξεις τῷ φίλῳ προίεσθαι, καὶ εἶναι κάλλιον τοῦ αὐτὸν πράξαι τὸ αἷτιον τῷ φίλῳ γενέσθαι. 1169, a 32.

the true function of a friend in his capacity of a second self to provide what a man cannot otherwise get, and as the poet says—

‘What need of friends when fortune makes us blest?’ ¹³⁸

But it certainly seems an anomaly to assign to the happy man other goods and to deprive him of friendship which is the greatest of all. Moreover, a good and therefore happy man requires some objects of his benevolence, and friends are very specially the proper objects. This raises the further question, ‘Are friends more wanted in prosperity or in adversity?’ To some extent they are wanted in both cases, for in the latter we require to be helped and in the former some one to help. To revert to the original point:—we can hardly make the happy man a hermit; ¹³⁹ no one would choose to enjoy all good things by himself, man being naturally a social being. ¹⁴⁰ Now as the happy man possesses goods he must possess friends, and friends of merit; it is not enough that he should live in the society of strangers or chance acquaintances. All this goes to show that friends are necessary to the happy man. What then is the value of the statement that friends are not essential to happiness? ¹⁴¹ Is it not this? The ordinary idea of a friend is that he is some one useful or agreeable, and as the happy man certainly does not require the former,

¹³⁸ “ὅταν δ’ ὁ δαίμων εὖ διδῷ, τί δεῖ φίλων;”

¹³⁹ ἄτοπον δ’ ἴσως καὶ τὸ μονώτην ποιεῖν τὸν μακάριον. 1169, b 16, cf. 1097, b 9.

¹⁴⁰ οὐδεὶς γὰρ ἔλοιτ’ ἂν καθ’ αὐτὸν τὰ πάντ’ ἔχειν ἀγαθὰ· πολιτικὸν γὰρ ὁ ἄνθρωπος καὶ συζῆν πεφυκός. 1169, b 17.

¹⁴¹ τί οὖν λέγουσιν οἱ πρῶτοι, καὶ πῇ ἀληθεύουσιν; 1169, b 22.

nor indeed the latter, except to a small extent, they infer that he does not require any friends. But this point is not tenable. Happiness, as has already been pointed out, is a function,—a part of ourselves, not something outside which we may possess or not, like a piece of property.¹⁴² Now if so, and if the actions of a good man are good and pleasureable—pleasures, too, essentially his own,¹⁴³ if moreover we can watch the operation of a function better in others than in ourselves—it follows that the actions of virtuous friends as exhibited in their conduct will give pleasure to a good man; the good man, in fact, gets pleasure both ways—he has the pleasure consequent on his own activity and the pleasure of observing that activity in others. The happy man, therefore, requires friends. There is a farther reason. It is thought that the happy man ought to have a happy life; but such a life is difficult for one who lives alone; by himself he can hardly work continuously, it is easier to do so in conjunction with and in reference to others.¹⁴⁴ Add to this that, as Theognis has said, living with good men is an exercise in virtue.¹⁴⁵ If we look to ultimate reasons, we see that a virtuous friend is in the nature of things something that a good man would choose. For animal life is defined by the power of sensation, human life by the power of sensation and intelligence, and inasmuch as a power is always referred to its function—function being the dominant factor—

¹⁴² ἡ γὰρ εὐδαιμονία ἐνέργειά τις ἐστίν, ἡ δ' ἐνέργεια δῆλον ὅτι γίνεται καὶ οὐκ ὑπάρχει ὥσπερ κτῆμά τι. 1169, b 29; cf. 1099, a 16.

¹⁴³ ἔστι δὲ καὶ τὸ οἰκεῖον τῶν ἡδέων. 1169, b 33.

¹⁴⁴ μεθ' ἐτέρων καὶ πρὸς ἄλλους. 1170, a 6.

¹⁴⁵ γίνοιτο δ' ἂν καὶ ἄσκησις τις τῆς ἀρετῆς ἐκ τοῦ συζῆν τοῖς ἀγαθοῖς, ὥσπερ καὶ Θέογνις φησιν. 1170, a 11.

human life may be considered as the exercise of the functions of sensation and intelligence.¹⁴⁶ Now, life is in itself good and pleasure-giving; it will therefore be so to the good man, to whom all natural goods are good. If this be so, and if the exercise of our various functions of sense and intelligence, in other words, if the fact of our existence involves the consciousness of it; ¹⁴⁷ and if, as has been said, existence is an object of choice, and especially to the good man, and if such a man is to his friend as he is to himself, then he must needs desire his friend to live for the same reasons, or nearly so, as he desires to live himself. He ought therefore to have the consciousness of his friend's existence together with the consciousness of his own, and this he will get by living with him and by intellectual companionship and conversation; for when we talk of men living together we do not mean that they are eating in the same field like cattle. To sum up this argument; if, as has been shown, mere existence is an object of desire to the good man, and if the existence of a friend is much the same as his own existence, a friend is one of the things that a man who is to be happy will choose to have; but a thing which he will choose to have he ought to have, otherwise he will be deficient in something."¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁶ τὸ δὲ ζῆν ὀρίζονται τοῖς ζώοις δυνάμει αἰσθήσεως, ἀνθρώποις δ' αἰσθήσεως ἢ νοήσεως· ἡ δὲ δύναμις εἰς τὴν ἐνέργειαν ἀνάγεται, τὸ δὲ κύριον ἐν τῇ ἐνέργειᾳ· ἔοικε δὲ τὸ ζῆν εἶναι κυρίως τὸ αἰσθάνεσθαι ἢ νοεῖν. 1170, a 16. (ἡ = καί.)

¹⁴⁷ εἰ δ' αὐτὸ τὸ ζῆν ἀγαθὸν καὶ ἡδύ—καὶ ἔστι τι τὸ αἰσθανόμενον ὅτι ἐνεργοῦμεν, ὥστε ἂν αἰσθανώμεθ' ὅτι αἰσθανόμεθα, καὶ νοῶμεν, ὅτι νοοῦμεν, τὸ δ' ὅτι αἰσθανόμεθα ἢ νοοῦμεν, ὅτι ἐσμέν—1170, a 25, 30–32.

¹⁴⁸ ὅ δ' ἐστὶν αὐτῷ αἰρετόν, τοῦτο δεῖ ὑπάρχειν αὐτῷ, ἢ ταύτη ἐνδεής ἐσται. 1170, b 17.

CHAPTER 10.—“Ought we, then, to have a large circle of friends, or does what has been well said of a guest-friend apply, ‘some but not many’? The maxim certainly applies to friendships formed with a view to usefulness, for to return the services of a great number of friends is both troublesome and practically impossible. A larger number than suffice for the purposes of private life are superfluous for the requirements of higher life.¹⁴⁹ As to friends for pleasure, a few are enough—they are like seasoning in our food. But what of good friends? Can we assign a limit here as we can to the citizens of a state? Ten men will not make a state, and if there were a hundred thousand it would cease to be a state.¹⁵⁰ ‘How much?’ is not a thing that you can lay your finger on; it is whatever lies between certain boundaries.¹⁵¹ In the case of friends, then, there is a proper number defined in this way and perhaps best by saying that it is as many as we can manage to live with. Obviously we cannot do that with a large number of persons. One reason is that the friends must be mutual friends if they are all to live together, and this would be difficult in the case of many. Another reason is that appropriate sympathy would become difficult, for it would probably happen that you would have to rejoice with one and grieve with another at the same time. Possibly the true rule will be not to seek to have as many friends as possible, but only so many as suffice for the intimate life of friendship. It is as impossible

¹⁴⁹ οἱ πλείους δὴ τῶν πρὸς τὸν οἰκεῖον βίον ἱκανῶν περίεργοι καὶ ἐμπόδιοι πρὸς τὸ καλῶς ζῆν. 1170, b 26.

¹⁵⁰ οὔτε γὰρ ἐκ δέκα ἀνθρώπων γένοιτ’ ἂν πόλις, οὔτ’ ἐκ δέκα μυριάδων ἔτι πόλις ἐστίν. 1170, b 31.

¹⁵¹ τὸ δὲ ποσὸν οὐκ ἔστιν ἴσως ἐν τι, ἀλλὰ πᾶν τὸ μεταξὺ τινῶν ὠρισμένων. 1170, b 32.

to have a deep friendship for many as to be in love with more than one. For love is an exaggerated friendship and has only one object; on the same principle a deep friendship has few objects. Experience shows this to be the case. Look at the friendship of comrades; the celebrated ones are all between two.¹⁵²

“Men with a large circle of acquaintance who know everybody are friends of nobody, except in a social sense;¹⁵³ they are called ‘pleasant fellows.’ In this sense it is possible to have a large circle of friends without being insincere; you may be quite genuine. But you cannot have a disinterested friendship based on character for a large number of people.”

CHAPTER 11.—“We revert to the question asked but not answered above; do we want friends most in prosperity or in adversity? They are sought in both cases, for the unfortunate require assistance and the prosperous require some one whom they can live with and benefit; in adversity friends are more necessary, and therefore those who are useful are sought in that case, but it is a higher thing to have them in prosperity, and for this reason men seek out those who are morally good

¹⁵² οὐδὲ γὰρ ἐνδέχεται δόξειεν ἂν πολλοῖς εἶναι φίλον σφόδρα. διόπερ οὐ δ' ἐρᾶν πλείονων· ὑπερβολὴ γάρ τις εἶναι βούλεται φιλίας, τοῦτο δὲ πρὸς ἓνα· καὶ τὸ σφόδρα δὴ πρὸς ὀλίγους. οὕτω δ' ἔχειν ἔοικε ἐπὶ τῶν πραγμάτων· οὐ γίνονται γὰρ φίλοι πολλοὶ κατὰ τὴν ἐταιρικὴν φιλίαν, αἱ δ' ὑμνούμεναι ἐν δυσὶ λέγονται. 1171, a 10; 13.

¹⁵³ πλὴν πολιτικῶς. πολιτικῶς is here used in the sense in which a man was said in the last chapter to be πολιτικὸν καὶ συζῆν πεφυκός. 1169, b 18. Fellow burgesses, members of the same ward or club, are included in the term.

as being those whom they prefer to benefit and live with. Both in prosperity and in adversity the mere presence of friends gives pleasure;—our troubles are lightened by their sympathy—whether in the sense of helping us to bear a burden, or whether their presence and the consciousness of their sympathy relieves our pains, may be a question.¹⁵⁴ But their presence has a mixed effect; merely to see your friends gives pleasure, and helps you not to grieve if you are in trouble, but then it is painful to feel that some one else is pained by your distress. Hence those of a manly disposition take care not to let their friends share their sorrow, unless indeed the relief obtained is greater than the pain given; certainly they will not allow fellow-mourners to come near them, not being in the habit of mourning themselves. Effeminate men and weak women like to have people to groan with, but we should always imitate the best. In prosperity, however, the presence of friends makes society pleasanter and gives you the agreeable consciousness of their pleasure at your good fortune. The rule, then, is ‘Be forward in calling friends to your side when you are prosperous but refrain when you are in trouble; share your miseries as little as possible.’¹⁵⁵ But friends ought to be summoned when they can render great services at small personal trouble; on the other hand it is proper to go heartily and uncalled for to

¹⁵⁴ ἔστι γὰρ καὶ ἡ παρουσία αὐτῇ τῶν φίλων ἡδεῖα καὶ ἐν ταῖς εὐτυχίαις καὶ ἐν ταῖς δυστυχίαις· κουφίζονται γὰρ οἱ λυπόν-
μενοι συναλγούντων τῶν φίλων. διὸ καὶ ἀπορήσειεν τις
πότερον ὥσπερ βάρους μεταλαμβάνουσιν, ἢ τοῦτο μὲν οὖν, ἡ
παρουσία δ’ αὐτῶν ἡδεῖα οὕσα καὶ ἡ ἔννοια τοῦ συναλγεῖν
ἐλάττω τὴν λύπην ποιεῖ. 1171, a 27.

¹⁵⁵ μεταδιδόναι γὰρ ὡς ἥκιστα δεῖ τῶν κακῶν, ὅθεν τὸ “ ἄλγος
ἐγὼ δυστυχῶν.” 1171, b 17.

the side of the unfortunate. If you can assist one with whom all things are going well, be eager to do so, but hold back if you are likely to get a benefit; it is not an honourable thing to desire to be helped. Still you must be careful when rejecting advances not to be thought disagreeable; it is a thing which sometimes happens.¹⁵⁶ In all cases, therefore, the presence of friends seems desirable."

CHAPTER 12.—"Can we not say then, that as with lovers what they like best is to gaze on one another, preferring as they do the exercise of this sense as the very essence and origin of love to all others, so with friends what they most desire is to be together? Friendship is something which you have in common and a man is related to his friend as he is related to himself; and as, relatively to himself, the consciousness of his own existence is the chief thing, it must be the chief thing in reference to his friend, and this consciousness being realised in living together a common life will naturally be desired.¹⁵⁷ And that which seems to each one to be existence—that for the sake of which they desire to live, is the thing they wish to spend their time in doing with their friends. Some like to drink together, some to gamble, others to join in athletic exercises, or in sport or philosophical pursuits. The result is that the goodness of the good and the badness of the vicious is increased by association, for men's characters are moulded by those in whose society they take pleasure. 'Good things come from the good' as the saying is."

¹⁵⁶ δόξαν δ' ἀηδίας ἐν τῷ διωθεῖσθαι ἴσως εὐλαβητέον· ἐνίστε γὰρ συμβαίνει. 1171, b 25.

¹⁵⁷ ἡ δ' ἐνέργεια γίνεται αὐτῆς [τῆς αἰσθήσεως ὅτι ἔστιν] ἐν τῷ συζῆν. 1171, b 35.

REMARKS

MUCH has been written on friendship, but nothing so fully and so well as in these two books of the *Ethics*.

Aristotle has treated the subject from various points of view,—tracing the growth of the feeling from the instinct which unites the two sexes, through the household, the village, the clan, into the State; analysing the feeling itself and showing the various forms it takes when directed to the different ends of goodness, pleasure and utility; dwelling at length on its influence on character and especially on the character of the good man, and discussing with much acuteness some of the hard cases which so frequently arise from the conflict of duties in the complicated affairs of life. Although the subject as a whole is treated in a somewhat disjointed fashion and in parts carelessly written in the text we possess, Aristotle's object is throughout clearly visible. It is, first, to show the importance of friendship as a factor in the formation of good conduct, next to show its value as the tie which unites the members of the state, and finally to show its place and value as an ingredient of happiness.

What is friendship? Aristotle was in some difficulty in answering this question. He felt, as every one does, that it is conduct of a very high order, but he could hardly say in so many words that it was a virtue, because he had already defined virtue in terms which expressly exclude friendship. Friendship is a feeling. "I call

feelings," says Aristotle, "such things as desire, anger, fear, confidence, envy, joy, *friendship*." ¹⁵⁸ But good conduct is a habit, and habits and feelings are different functions of mind. Nor does it either come into being or develope in the way in which the virtues of conduct do; the latter grow out of an accumulation of single acts, and they are increased, like the artistic faculty, by practice; ¹⁵⁹ whereas friendship begins, like love, from the sensation of sight, ¹⁶⁰ and its increase is due to acquaintance and familiarity, not to a repetition of the sensations which originally produced it. Nor does friendship accommodate itself to the doctrine of the mean, so essential a part of the definition of good conduct. Friendly feeling is not half-way between affection and dislike, and if it were, you could not say without qualification that either extreme is bad. Nor are affection, friendship and aversion generically connected. You may dislike, and even hate a person, for reasons, none of which are the same, or even of the same kind, as those for which you like some one else. Moreover the identity of thought and feeling which is found in pure and perfect friendship, and which is grounded on the singleness of aim in the character of the friends, makes it impossible for it to be a mean state, unless indeed (which Aristotle denies) a man is capable of hating himself. And yet, definition or no definition, Aristotle could not deny friendship to be a virtue; he therefore compromises matters by saying that it is "a kind of virtue." ¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁸ 1105, b 21.

¹⁵⁹ τὰς δ' ἀρετὰς λαμβάνομεν ἐνεργήσαντες πρότερον, ὥσπερ καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν ἄλλων τεχνῶν. 1103, a 31.

¹⁶⁰ εἰοικε δὴ ἀρχὴ φιλίας εἶναι, ὥσπερ τοῦ ἐρᾶν, ἢ διὰ τῆς ὀψεως ἡδονῆς. 1167, a 3.

¹⁶¹ ἔστι γὰρ ἀρετὴ τις, ἣ μετ' ἀρετῆς. 1155, a 3.

Friendship as conceived by Aristotle, in its perfect form, as existing between two men of complete virtue (and it is only in this form that its true character can be judged) is an emotion which stimulates the conduct of each by a kind of moral induction, the goodness of one friend re-acting on the other with the result that both become better than either could have become singly. In the less perfect forms which constitute all but a small minority of cases it is a help to action; it supplies motives and material aids, it gives counsel and advice, but it is not, either in its perfect or imperfect shape, a mode of conduct; it is a motive of conduct, a feeling which produces conduct, and without which either nothing, or nothing so effective, would be done. To conduct yourself in a friendly way is to do acts in themselves good under the impulse of a desire to benefit another, which acts but for that desire would never have been done at all. It stands to conduct as pleasure stands to happiness, it increases and completes it.¹⁶²

Aristotle's psychological analysis takes in general too little account of feeling as a direct determinant of conduct. Desire, or appetency (*ὄρεξις*), which he brackets with practical reason as together making up the motive of action, is not the same thing as feeling (*πάθος*), for desire reaches forward to the future, whereas feeling is a present state of consciousness. But in these books he does something to remedy this defect by insisting on the value of friendship which is, in its essence, developed and sustained feeling.

It must be confessed, however, that from his own point of view—that of a writer seeking how the citizens of a state are to be made good, and how the unity of the

¹⁶² τελειοῖ—συναύξει τὴν ἐνέργειαν. 1174, b 31; 1175, a 30.

state is to be secured, Aristotle's description of perfect friendship is the least satisfactory part of his treatment of the subject. He postulates in that description two men of complete and equal virtue, each deriving pleasure from seeing his own excellences reflected in the excellences of his friend or other self, each unselfishly desiring the good of the other for the other's own sake, each liking the other for what the other really is, without any regard to collateral advantages, and each getting from each the same amount of good as he gives.¹⁶³ Nor is this all; self-effacement is carried to such a point that the friends are supposed capable of allowing one another to be good rather than of being good themselves.¹⁶⁴ Aristotle understates the case when he says that such friendships are rare; it is safe to say that they are never met with; did they exist, moral action would be brought to a deadlock.

It may be said that this picture of perfect friendship is an ideal and must not be criticised for want of actuality. But impossible ideals are out of place in a treatise which, as we are so often reminded, is a practical one. Aristotle's criticism of Plato's ideal good is applicable to his own ideal friendship—"it is something which men can neither get nor could use if they got it."¹⁶⁵ To this it may perhaps be replied that the value of ideals does not depend on their applicability, but that they are useful as indicating the mark at which we should aim although we recognise our inability to reach it. There

¹⁶³ 1156, b 7-33; 1170, b 5 sqq.

¹⁶⁴ ἐνδέχεται δὲ τὰς πράξεις τῷ φίλῳ προίεσθαι, καὶ εἶναι κάλλιον τοῦ αὐτὸν πράξαι τὸ αἴτιον τῷ φίλῳ γένεσθαι. 1169, a 32.

¹⁶⁵ δῆλον ὡς οὐκ ἂν εἴη πρακτὸν οὐδὲ κτητὸν ἀνθρώπῳ. 1096, b 33.

may be imaginative and enthusiastic natures who are stimulated to action in this way, just as there are persons who believe a thing because it is impossible to believe it, but the majority of mankind will not exert themselves without a fair prospect of success, and if they think a thing to be beyond their powers they will not put forth their powers to get it. It may be added that the self-sacrifice, not to say self-effacement, of Aristotle's complete friendship is inconsistent with his own view of a complete life, which consists in the full exercise of all the functions (including, of course, the purely self-regarding ones) and which is accompanied by the enjoyment of the pleasures (which must equally include the selfish ones) which accompany function. His picture therefore assumes conditions which do not exist in the world around us, and which, did they exist, would in no short time lead to the extinction of the human race; for if mankind could be persuaded to be unselfish to the point of yielding to others the exercise of the virtues of conduct instead of themselves exercising those virtues, nothing would be done; each would urge his neighbour to be good instead of being good himself, and life, which is a perpetual struggle against adverse influences, would come to an end.

"It is not a random impulse, but a natural impulse, which makes a man a friend to himself."¹⁶⁶ A man must live before he can help others to live, and under present circumstances if he is to live at all he must do many things and get many things at the expense of others. To love your neighbour as yourself in the literal sense of the words

¹⁶⁶ μὴ γὰρ οὐ μάτην τὴν πρὸς αὐτὸν αὐτὸς ἔχει φιλίαν ἕκαστος, ἀλλ' ἔστι τοῦτο φυσικόν. Arist. Polit. ii. 5 ; 1263, a 41.

is not a possible rule of action; to love your neighbour more than yourself, which in Aristotle's view is the supreme virtue of friendship, is a phrase and nothing more; it does not correspond to anything we actually believe or do. A sense of the difficulties involved in this theory led Aristotle to point out that love for one's neighbour in fact proceeds from love for one's self,¹⁶⁷ or, as he otherwise expressed it, that love for others in its highest form is a likeness or imitation of self-love in its highest form, all the marks by which true friendship is known being found in the feelings which a good man experiences towards himself;¹⁶⁸ which is as much as to say that egoism in order of time must precede altruism. This is a proposition which Aristotle, who found the origin of friendship in the sexual instinct and traced its history therefrom through the family to the state, would have no difficulty in maintaining. The priority of the chronological order is not, however, the reason he gives. He relies on the statement that a friend is a second self, and being so, that a man stands to his second self as he stands to his first self. Therefore, inasmuch as he wishes his first self to live, as he desires good for it, takes pleasure in its society and so on, he must desire all these things for his second self.¹⁶⁹ A man's own virtuous character is thus assumed as a condition precedent to friendship, and as such a character cannot be produced or thought of without the performance of

¹⁶⁷ τὰ φιλικὰ δὲ τὰ πρὸς τοὺς πέλας, καὶ οἷς αἱ φίλαι ὀρίζονται, ἔοικεν ἐκ τῶν πρὸς ἑαυτὸν ἐληλυθέναι. 1166, a 2.

¹⁶⁸ ἡ ὑπερβολὴ τῆς φιλίας τῇ πρὸς αὐτὸν ὁμοιοῦται. 1166, b 1. ὑπερβολή = "perfection," as in 1145, a 24, p. 480.

¹⁶⁹ τῷ δὴ πρὸς αὐτὸν ἕκαστα τούτων ὑπάρχειν τῷ ἐπιεικεῖ, πρὸς δὲ τὸν φίλον ἔχειν ὥσπερ πρὸς αὐτόν (ἔστι γὰρ ὁ φίλος ἄλλος αὐτός) καὶ ἡ φιλία τούτων εἶναι τι δοκεῖ. 1166, a 29.

self-regarding acts, egoism takes precedence of altruism in order of conception as well as in order of time.

The statement that the marks of friendship towards others are derived from those marks in a man's self, and the inferences which this statement involves, go far to curtail the extreme and impracticable lengths to which the doctrine of unselfishness had been pushed in the theory of ideal friendship. Aristotle was not the man to forget for long the fact that "moral obligations can extend no further than natural possibilities." ¹⁷⁰ He says that equity is of the nature of friendship; if he had said that friendship is of the nature of equity he would have kept within natural possibilities and he would have put up a standard of conduct difficult enough to satisfy any reasonable advocate of the ideal; this is probably what he really means.

The relation between justice and friendship indicated in the fifth book is worked out in the eighth and ninth books in some detail, although in a way not easily followed, the reader being left to look up the points of resemblance and to note the points of difference by collecting the scattered references to the subject in the text.

Their first similarity is that they both refer to others; they arise and can only arise when two or more persons are in some way associated. But given such association both are necessarily present so far as the objects of the association extend, but no farther. If nine men combine to win a boat race (*συμπλοϊκὴ κοινωνία*) justice requires that there should be no shirking, that each man shall do his fair share of work, otherwise the others will have to do more than their fair share, which would be unequal and therefore unjust. But justice does not

¹⁷⁰ Butler, Serm. xii. p. 157.

require them to pay their tradesmen, that being outside the object of the association. So the members of the crew must know one another, "in a way," and become friends "in a way," *i.e.*, so far as is necessary to enable them to get on together and avoid irritation and disputes which would interfere with training and prevent effective co-operation. But they are not required to be friends outside these limits; they need not be socially agreeable or intellectually interesting. Even if the association be for a professedly immoral object it cannot be promoted without justice and friendship. Even pirates are bound to take some of the ten commandments with them when they put out to sea.¹⁷¹

So, too, in a commercial partnership there must be both friendship and justice limited and determined by its scope, and if the partners quarrel or behave unfairly to one another to the extent of interfering with the objects of the association, it will be right on these grounds to dissolve the partnership.

But not only are friendship and justice co-extensive, they are also co-intensive; the closer the union, the greater the obligation to be just, it being considered worse to swindle a friend than a stranger, and more reprehensible to refuse to help your brother than to decline to subscribe to a local charity.¹⁷²

Now what is true of all minor associations is true of that great association "The State" of which they are

¹⁷¹ "Thou concludest like the sanctimonious pirate that went to sea with the Ten Commandments, but scraped one out of the table, 'Thou shalt not steal.' Ay, that he razed." Shak., M. for M. i. 2. 8.

¹⁷² αὐξήσιν λαμβάνει [τὰ ἄδικα] τῷ μᾶλλον πρὸς φίλους εἶναι, οἷον χρήματα ἀποστερῆσαι ἐταῖρον δεινότερον ἢ πολίτην, καὶ μὴ βοηθῆσαι ἀδελφῷ ἢ ὁθνείῳ. 1160, a 4.

but parts, and whose existence depends on its satisfying the common needs and interests of the community.

Nor is this all: Aristotle had already pointed out (V. 6) that justice takes various forms;—that of distributive justice, applicable to those who are free and unequal, in merit, and a kind of justice resembling this and found in the relations of master and slave, father and son, husband and wife. Distributive justice endeavours to effect an equality between the members of the community by apportioning rewards to merit, but in the relations of father and son, master and slave, this cannot be done, because the son up to a certain age, and the slave always, have no merits, being merely a part of the father's or master's possessions; still there is some justice even here, for it is wrong for a father to treat his sons as slaves, and even a slave is a member of the family community and a sharer in some of its privileges.¹⁷³ Every kind of common life therefore assumes justice of some kind as a basis. In the case of husband and wife, although equality does not exist, there is an approach to it, and just arrangements as to the respective rights and duties of a husband and wife are possible to a greater extent than in the cases of slaves or children. Now friendship takes corresponding forms, varying with the status of those who come within it; there is the friendship of equals to which the rules of regulative justice apply, and there is the friendship of those who are admittedly unequal in respect of their

¹⁷³ 1160, a 8.

εἴσω κομίζου καὶ σύ, Κασάνδραν λέγω,
ἐπεὶ σ' ἔθηκε Ζεὺς ἀμηνίτως δόμοις
κοινωνὸν εἶναι χερνίβων, πολλῶν μετὰ
δούλων σταθεῖσαν κτησίῳ βωμοῦ πέλας.

Æschy. Agam. 1035.

position, merits, and power to help. In the latter case the equality which friendship requires is obtained by the application of a rule which, like that of distributive justice, is based on the assumption of inequality, and the rule is that the better or more useful friend should be liked more than he is expected to like.¹⁷⁴ And as by a metaphor a man may be said to be unjust to himself (see page 319) when his desires overpower his reason, by a like metaphor he may be a friend to himself.

However impossible it may be to bring complete friendship within the doctrine of the mean, the incomplete forms which constitute practically the whole of the cases in which friendship is actually found are thus shown to be cases of equality, and if so, to be a "kind of mean" like justice itself.¹⁷⁵ This is one reason why the similarity of justice and friendship is insisted upon. But Aristotle's main purpose was to bring out the political value of friendship by showing how much it has in common with the essentially political virtue of justice. In one important respect, at least, namely as a bond of union between the members of the state, it is more valuable than justice itself.¹⁷⁶

Plato had sought to secure the unity of his state by socialistic arrangements with regard to property. If self-interest could be got out of the way, so that all or nearly all the citizens could say "mine" and "not mine" at the same time with reference to the same objects, the constitution of that state would be, so Plato

¹⁷⁴ 1158, b 25.

¹⁷⁵ ἐπεὶ δὲ τὸ ἴσον μέσον, τὸ δίκαιον μέσον ἂν εἴη. 1131, a 14.

¹⁷⁶ ἔοικε δὲ καὶ τὰς πόλεις συνέχειν ἡ φιλία, καὶ οἱ νομοθεταὶ μᾶλλον περὶ αὐτὴν σπουδάζειν ἢ τὴν δικαιοσύνην. 1155, a 23.

thought, perfect.¹⁷⁷ Such, at least, is the doctrine of the Republic. But Aristotle remarks that unanimity with regard to property does not go far enough. The agreement must be on more weighty subjects than property, on important questions of public policy. It is not enough for everybody to agree to say "mine" and "not mine" with regard to the consolidated fund or the unearned increment of the land. Unanimity, if it is to serve as a bond of union at all, must be on constitutional questions, on state alliances, on matters of high policy as well: Shall the great public offices be thrown open to women? Shall we enter into an offensive alliance with Japan?¹⁷⁸ And even on these subjects you must go into detail. If you determine to appoint a committee or to send an embassy you must name the members. The brothers in the "Phoenician Women" were quite agreed that a strong personal government was best for Thebes, but they differed as to who should be the person, and this was the whole crux of the question.¹⁷⁹

The political value of unanimity is not, therefore, so great as Plato supposed. The elimination of selfish interests among the rulers by a system of communism (even supposing it to be practically possible, which Aristotle doubted) would not produce agreement among them on many subjects upon which it is essential for

¹⁷⁷ ἐν ᾗτινι δὴ πόλει πλείστοι ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ κατὰ ταῦτά τοῦτο λέγουσι, τὸ ἕκον καὶ τὸ οὐκ ἕκον, αὕτη ἄριστα διοικεῖται. Plato, Repub. 462 C.

¹⁷⁸ περὶ τὰ πρακτὰ, καὶ τούτων περὶ τὰ ἐν μεγέθει—οἷον αἱ πόλεις, ὅταν πᾶσι δοκῇ τὰς ἀρχὰς αἰρετὰς εἶναι, ἢ συμμάχῃν Λακεδαιμονίοις. 1167, a 28.

¹⁷⁹ ὅταν δ' ἑκάτερος ἑαυτὸν βούληται, ὥσπερ οἱ ἐν ταῖς Φοινίσσαις, στασιάζουσιν· οὐ γάρ ἐστιν ὁμονοεῖν τὸ αὐτὸ ἑκάτερον ἐννοεῖν ὁδῆποτε ἀλλὰ το ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ. 1167, a 32.

them to be at one. They might all sing "mine" and "not mine" in unison, but unison is not harmony; some might favour an Athenian empire, others might prefer a little Athens within the limits of Attica. But these large questions are precisely those on which citizens ought to be agreed.

There are two other objections to assuming unity as the end of the state: one is that it is retrograde—by so doing you tend to bring back the state to the level of the family,¹⁸⁰ and the other is that the true end of the state is completeness and not unanimity. But even if the best political interests could be secured by eliminating purely selfish and personal interests, friendship, and not unanimity, would be most effective for the purpose. Make your citizens friends, and you will weld them together more securely than any system of communism can do.

Friendship therefore includes everything that Plato's unanimity was designed to secure, and more besides; it ensures not only justice but equity; it makes the citizens agree on policy as well as on property, and beyond all this it creates a unity of sentiment as well as an agreement of opinion. To make men friendly and not to make them unanimous is in Aristotle's opinion the true goal of statesmanship.

A description of the various forms of government does not at first sight seem relevant to a treatise on friendship. But Aristotle wished to bring out the parallelism of the two by showing that the unselfishness characteristic of the highest friendship is also characteristic of the best government; that in that best government not only bare justice but something better than bare

¹⁸⁰ προΐούσα καὶ γινομένη μία μᾶλλον οὐδὲ πόλις ἔσται.
Polit. ii. 2; 1261, a 17.

justice would be found, as in friendship. The best state is monarchy; it is best because the ruler thinks only of the interests of his subjects. The test here applied is an ethical one; that applied by Plato in the dialogue called the "The Statesman" is a purely intellectual one. The "right polity" of Plato is one in which you find fully instructed statesmen at the head; the art of government is based on scientific principles.¹⁸¹ This is Carlyle's advice, "Find in any country the ablest man that exists there: raise him to the supreme place and loyally reverence him; you have a perfect government for that country."¹⁸² Plato and Carlyle did not realise as fully as Aristotle did the difficulty of finding the scientifically instructed ruler; and they forgot that even for him there are no axioms at once sufficiently true and sufficiently specific to serve as guides in the complicated and ever changing circumstances which confront the practical statesman. Politicians are of course obliged to appear to act on principle, otherwise they would not get the ear of the public, but when they explain their principles they usually content themselves with stating generalisations of doubtful and limited application, maxims which possibly represent their personal views but which they would find it difficult to support by any induction from experience or to deduce from any generally admitted or provable data.

To us who are accustomed to think of states extending over enormous areas, with millions of inhabitants fre-

¹⁸¹ ἀναγκαῖον δὴ καὶ πολιτειῶν, ὡς ἔοικε, ταύτην ὀρθὴν διαφερόντως εἶναι καὶ μόνην πολιτείαν, ἐν ᾗ τις ἂν εὐρίσκοι τοὺς ἄρχοντας ἀληθῶς ἐπιστήμονας καὶ οὐ δοκοῦντας μόνον, ἐάν τε κατὰ νόμους ἐάν τε ἄνευ νόμων ἄρχωσι, καὶ ἐκόντων ἢ ἀκόντων, ἢ πενόμενοι ἢ πλουτοῦντες, τούτων ὑπολογιστεον οὐδέν. Plato, *Politicus*, 293 C.

¹⁸² "Heroes and Hero Worship," vi.

quently differing in race, language, habits and religion, it seems strange to talk of friendship as a force in politics. But to Aristotle, Russia, China or our own Indian empire would not have appeared to be states at all. To him the type of a state, or at least of a good state, is a city with a definite territory of limited extent, with a population "large enough to satisfy its own needs and not too large to be easily within view."¹⁸³ Under these conditions, and where, as in most Greek cities, people lived largely in public and were constantly meeting in the market, the law courts, the Assembly and at religious festivals, acquaintance and even friendship between the limited class of citizens would not be impossible. There is another point in Aristotle's treatment of friendship which strikes the modern reader. It is strictly confined to men. Friendship between women, or between a man and a woman, is never alluded to. Yet such friendships must have existed in Greek life notwithstanding the seclusion in which women lived and their inferiority in intellectual attainments to the men. If a modern reader is inclined to quarrel with a view of friendship which takes no account of feelings which always and everywhere play a considerable part in life, he must remember the limited scope of the *Ethics*. It is not a treatise on universal conduct; it is a treatise on the conduct proper for the citizen of a Greek state. From citizenship in such a state women were excluded, and in Aristotle's opinion rightly so. He did not share Plato's views as to the expediency of allowing them to participate in the rights and obligations of citizenship. In taking this view of the subject, Aristotle was supported by Greek and

¹⁸³ οὗτός ἐστι πόλις ὅρος ἄριστος, ἡ μέγιστη τοῦ πλήθους ὑπερβολὴ πρὸς αὐτάρχειαν ζωῆς εὐσύνοπτος. *Polit.* iv. (vii.) 4; 1326, b 23.

especially by Athenian sentiment. Friendship between men was the only friendship worthy of the name, and it was not only a common and highly approved feeling, but was consecrated by celebrated heroic examples—*αἱ ὑμνούμεναι φιλίας*—and in historic times by the ever memorable case of Harmodius and Aristogeiton.

Reviewing Aristotle's treatment of friendship as a whole, it is seen to be a highly instructive and, with some limitations, complete view of the growth and value of the feeling both in its social and political aspects. Friendship is first recognised as an instinct which is a *sine qua non* of the higher forms of animal life—the maternal instinct—involving the self-sacrifice of the female parent for the time, frequently considerable, during which the progeny lives at her expense. Aristotle repeatedly and pointedly refers to this self-sacrifice, and it is evident that he had fully grasped its biological meaning. The maternal or parental instinct passes insensibly into the feeling of family affection, promoted by the intimate association of father, mother and children in the home and by the various ties of interest and interdependence which such association creates. This is the second stage in the history of friendship. With the union of families into village communities and of these into still larger social aggregates the family feeling widens, ceases to be purely domestic and takes the form of mutual support in which the members of a community contribute in various ways to each other's welfare and protection. Through these gradations there arises in the city state the complex feeling called by Aristotle distinctively, friendship, based on sympathy of tastes and pursuits, from which the notion of material aid is frequently absent, and taking its highest form in the bond which unites the members of the state with a view to that full and complete life which is its end.

This is the chronological and genetic order of the production of friendship, the point of view of "watching

things as they are growing" ¹⁸⁴ and one which is always present to Aristotle's mind, not only in his professedly biological works but in his Politics, Psychology, Ethics and elsewhere.

But this, although the most fruitful, is not the only method he employs. Frequently, instead of beginning at the beginning he begins at the end. When an organism like an animal or a state has arrived at its full development, the complete or developed form may be taken as a starting point from which inferences respecting the use and value of the parts can be drawn. The organs of a body or the members of a state discharge their functions with reference to the body or the state and not to themselves, in accordance with the plain intentions of nature. Hence such a whole is said to be "naturally prior to" its parts, and the rule is "the last in order of production is the first in order of nature." ¹⁸⁵

Now in Aristotle's treatment of "complete" friendship we have an example of his procedure when he takes what he calls the natural order. Having arrived by the genetic method at the fully developed form of friendship, he infers therefrom that friends will or ought to act in such and such a way, just as he would infer the functions of an organic body from considering it in its fully matured form and observing in what relation the parts stand to the body and to themselves. But this mode of inquiry, which is beset with many pitfalls even when you have before you a concrete and visible whole which can be observed, is unreliable in the case of a notional whole like perfect

¹⁸⁴ τὰ πράγματα φύόμενα βλέπειν. Polit. ii. 1; 1252, a 24.

¹⁸⁵ καὶ πρότερον ἐν τῇ φύσει πόλις ἢ οἰκία καὶ ἕκαστος ἡμῶν ἐστίν. Polit. i. 2. 1253, a 18. τὰ γὰρ ὕστερα τῇ γενέσει πρότερα τὴν φύσιν ἐστί, καὶ πρῶτον τὸ τῇ γενέσει τελευταῖον. De Part. Animal. ii. 1. 646, a 25.

friendship which is never met with and cannot be observed. And therefore, whilst Aristotle's history of friendship in general is instructive, and his treatment of the imperfect forms of which he had examples before his eyes vigorous and acute, his picture of perfect friendship is unreal, resembling a geometrical drawing rather than a study from life, and the inferences as to conduct which he deduces from it are doubtful and uncertified. Aristotle seems to have felt his subject. He writes more expansively than is usual with him. As a rule, his economy of words is such that he seems to be dictating a telegram, but in these books there are chapters which are almost eloquent.¹⁸⁶

¹⁸⁶ See Book VIII. c. 1.; Book IX. cc. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. and 12.

CHAPTER XI

Book X.
(1172, a 19—1181, b 23).

HAPPINESS

κύριαι δ' εἰσὶν αἱ κατ' ἀρετὴν ἐνέργειαι τῆς εὐδαιμονίας, αἱ δ' ἐναντίαι τοῦ ἐναντίου. Arist. E. N. i. 1100, b 9.

Let it be allowed, though virtue or moral rectitude does indeed consist in affection to and pursuit of what is right and good as such ; yet that when we sit down in a cool hour, we can neither justify to ourselves this or any other pursuit till we are convinced that it will be for our happiness or at least not contrary to it.

Butler, Sermon on Love for one's
Neighbour, p. 145.

Capacity of every kind sufficient for the requirement, conduces to happiness immediately and remotely—immediately by the pleasure accompanying the normal exercise of each power that is up to its work, and remotely by the pleasures which are furthered by the ends achieved.

Herbert Spencer, Ethics i. 189.

IN the concluding chapters of the tenth book Aristotle resumes the subject of happiness already outlined in the first book, but from a somewhat different point of view and with wider practical applications than had been necessary in the opening of the treatise.¹ It had there been laid down that the distinctive excellence of man, the highest performance of the functions special to him as such, in other words "his work," consisted in the active exercise of his rational powers. Further analysis had shown these rational powers to be of two kinds, corresponding to generically distinct classes of objects; one kind, distinguished as wisdom, operating in the field of necessary matter and drawing exact conclusions by the process of mediate inference from immediate and highly generalised data; the other kind, under the name of prudence, working in the field of contingent matter, and by the same process of mediate influence drawing probable conclusions from premisses true only for the most part. These two faculties were shown to have distinct ends. The end of prudence being to deliberate rightly on what is good and expedient for man, not in this or that circumstance or transaction, but generally and as conducive to a good life,² the end of

¹ περιγεγράφθω μὲν οὖν τὰγαθὸν ταύτη· δεῖ γὰρ ἴσως ὑποτυπῶσαι πρῶτον, εἰθ' ὕστερον ἀναγράψαι. i. 7. 1098, a 20.

² τὸ δύνασθαι καλῶς βουλευσασθαι περὶ τὰ αὐτῷ ἀγαθὰ καὶ συμφέροντα, οὐ κατὰ μέρος, ἀλλὰ πρὸς τὸ εὔ ζῆν ὅλως. 1140, a 26.

wisdom being absolute truth,—truth arrived at by processes which admit of no error from principles which admit of no question. As wisdom is the highest function of man's highest faculty, its exercise, in accordance with the teleological law that the end of a thing is what is special to a thing³ and with the biological law that the highest speciality is the exercise of the highest function,⁴ is the final cause of man's existence or happiness in the best and full sense of the word; the subordinate faculty of prudence having for its end happiness in a lower sense, that resulting from conduct performed under its guidance.

To examine and discuss perfect happiness was not necessary for Aristotle's purpose in the earlier books, where he was considering moral conduct only, and he therefore expressly reserved the consideration of it for a future time and place.⁵ In fulfilment of this promise he now takes it up.

But the Ethics being a practical work Aristotle could not conclude without pointing out how the subordinate happiness resulting from good conduct can in fact be attained; by what means, that is, the citizens of any state can be induced to do what they ought to do in order to make them happy; and this leads to the highly instructive chapter on education with which the treatise closes.

3 τὸ δ' ἰδίον ἐστὶ τὸ ἐκάστου τῆς γένεσεως τέλος. De Gen. Animal. 736, b 4.

4 ληπτέον ἄρ' ἐκατέρου τούτων [τοῦ ἐπιστημονικοῦ μορίου καὶ τοῦ λογιστικοῦ] τίς ἢ βελτίστη ἔξις· αὕτη γὰρ ἀρετὴ ἐκατέρου, ἢ δ' ἀρετὴ πρὸς τὸ ἔργον τὸ οἰκεῖον. 1139, a 15.

5 τρίτος δ' ἐστὶν ὁ θεωρητικός [βίος], ὑπὲρ οὗ τὴν ἐπίσκεψιν ἐν τοῖς ἐπομένοις ποιησόμεθα. 1096, a 4.

TEXT

BOOK X., CHAPTER 7.—Aristotle prefaces the description of ideal happiness by some remarks on happiness in general. Plato, in the *Philebus*, had put the question, “What is the supreme good?” in the following terms: “What is that habit or tendency of mind which will insure to all men a happy life?”⁶ Aristotle points out that happiness is not a habit at all, but an activity⁷—a habit in motion, not one at rest.⁸ If happiness were a habit, state, or condition only, then one who, like Endymion, spends his life in sleep might be called happy—a proposition which no one would agree to. It is, moreover, one of those energies or activities which are exercised for their own sake and not for the

⁶ ΣΩ διομολογησώμεθα καὶ τόδε. ΠΡΩ. το ποῖον; ΣΩ. Ως νῦν ἡμῶν ἐκάτερος ἔξιν ψυχῆς καὶ διάθεσιν ἀποφαίνειν τινὰ ἐπιχειρήσει τὴν δυναμένην ἀνθρώποις πᾶσι τὸν βίον εὐδαίμονα παρέχειν. Plato, *Phileb.* 11 D.

⁷ εἶπομεν δὴ ὅτι οὐκ ἔστιν ἔξις. 1176, a 33. See 1098, b 31. See p. 71.

⁸ The difference between habit and activity, between a state and the function of a state, was not marked by Plato, who uses the same word for both. It was first marked by Aristotle, and it constitutes one of the important improvements in philosophical language for which we are indebted to him.

sake of their results. Good conduct belongs to this class of activities, and so does amusement; art does not. It is true that in the arts mental energy sometimes of a high order is exercised, as in making a chronometer or writing a music score. But chronometers are made that they may be used, and music is written that it may be played, and but for these results no one would either make clocks or compose music. But it is different with regard to good conduct; we should choose to be just, brave, and temperate merely for the sake of being so, although it is true that we accidentally compass other ends as well.⁹

“But if happiness is the active exercise of our powers for the sake of exercising them, what are we to say about amusement? Many men, especially men who are looked up to, wealthy and powerful persons,¹⁰ occupy their leisure¹¹ in pure amusements, make it the principal object of their existence, and are contented to do so, not looking for any result beyond that afforded by amusement itself, and even making sacrifices of money and health for the purpose. Common opinion calls a life so spent ‘happy’; now life is divided between work and leisure, and if a man chooses to make amusement his work and other things his leisure, can we say that he is not happy? especially when we remember that his life satisfies the conditions just laid down for happiness.

“Aristotle is at some pains to discuss this view of the matter. It is not reasonable, he remarks, to take so

9 καθ' αὐτὰς δ' εἰσὶν αἰρεταὶ ἀφ' ὧν μηδὲν ἐπιζητεῖται παρὰ τὴν ἐνέργειαν· τοιαῦται δ' εἶναι δοκοῦσιν αἱ κατ' ἀρετὴν πράξεις· τὰ γὰρ καλὰ καὶ σπουδαῖα πράττειν τῶν δι' αὐτὰ αἰρετῶν. 1176, b 6.

¹⁰ τῶν εὐδαιμονιζομένων οἱ πολλοί. 1176, b 12.

¹¹ ἀποσχολάζουσιν. 1176, b 17.

much trouble and to submit to so much hardship for the sake of amusement; moreover, the 'earnest' or 'serious' man¹²—here identified by a play on words with the good man—does not approve; let it be granted that each man's bent determines his choice, his choice ought to agree with the choice of the serious man, and such a man certainly prefers virtuous action to amusement. Then, any one can amuse himself, even a slave can be as good at games as the best freeman, but no one admits that a slave can be happy. Games and amusement are only really useful as relaxations; Anacharis well observed, 'We play that we may work'; and this seems to be right.¹³ Amusements rightly considered are not an end in themselves, although those who indulge in them may think so, and happiness cannot be found in them, although diversion and relaxation may."

The chapter is noticeable both as showing the care with which Aristotle meets a view which does not seem to deserve so much attention as he gives to it, and also because it indicates his opinion of the place of amusement in life. Man cannot always be working; he requires rest; and games and the relaxation of social intercourse are the best form of rest. For this reason, in the eighth chapter of the fourth book he discusses how people ought to comport themselves when they are spending their time on these objects. But in our amusements we should not lose sight of their object, which is relaxation. To take amusement seriously, to spend toil and trouble on it,

¹² ὁ σπουδαῖος. 1176, b 25.

¹³ παίζειν ὅπως σπούδαζῃ, κατ' Ἀνάχαρσιν, ὁρῶς ἔχειν δοκεῖ. 1176, b 33.

thereby unfitting ourselves for real work, is to mistake its end and is foolish and childish.¹⁴

CHAPTER 8.—The two conditions of happiness in general, that it is a habit and one to be exercised for its own sake, having been laid down in the manner just described, we come to the consideration of supreme or ideal happiness. This must be the function of man's highest powers, which have already been said to be abstract thought.¹⁵ Aristotle proceeds to show how all the conditions which are considered to attach to happiness in general belong specially and emphatically to the exercise of the theorising intellect. "It is not only the highest function, but it admits of more continuous exertion¹⁶ than any other activity either of mind or body; next, the pleasure which is universally considered to be an ingredient in happiness is greater, purer, and more permanent here than elsewhere;¹⁷ thirdly, the

¹⁴ σπουδάζειν δὲ καὶ πονεῖν παιδιᾶς χάριν ἡλίθιον φαίνεται καὶ λίαν παιδικόν. 1176, b 32.

¹⁵ εἰ δ' ἐστὶν ἡ εὐδαιμονία κατ' ἀρετὴν ἐνέργεια, εὐλογον κατὰ τὴν κρατίστην· αὕτη δ' ἂν εἴη τοῦ ἀρίστου. εἴτε δὲ νοῦς τοῦτο εἴτε ἄλλο τι, ὃ δὲ κατὰ φύσιν δοκεῖ ἄρχειν καὶ ἡγεῖσθαι καὶ ἔννοιαν ἔχειν περὶ καλῶν καὶ θείων, εἴτε θεῖον ὃν καὶ αὐτὸ εἴτε τῶν ἐν ἡμῖν τὸ θεϊότατον, ἡ τούτου ἐνέργεια κατὰ τὴν οἰκείαν ἀρετὴν εἴη ἂν ἡ τελεία εὐδαιμονία. 1177, a 12.

¹⁶ ἔτι δὲ συνέχεστατη· θεωρεῖν γὰρ δυνάμεθα συνεχῶς μᾶλλον ἢ πράττειν ὅτιοῦν. 1177, a 21. Auguste Comte relates of himself that on one occasion he spent eighteen consecutive hours in continuous abstract thought.

¹⁷ εὐλογον δὲ τοῖς εἰδόσι τῶν ζητούντων ἡδίω τὴν διαγωγὴν εἶναι. 1177, a 26. Aristotle's statement that the

quality of self-sufficiency so often referred to is in a marked way the attribute of the life of abstract thought.¹⁸ Even philosophers, like other people, must live, but they require and are content with less than public or business men, who cannot help spending money and whose inclinations lead them to do it. The necessities of life are needed equally by both, although perhaps a man of the world takes a more liberal view of what is strictly necessary than a philosopher, but as to the necessities of action there is a striking difference between them.¹⁹ A man cannot be generous without money, nor brave without something to contend with, nor just without somebody to be just to; admitting the moral value of good intentions, it is impossible to know what a man's intentions are²⁰ unless he has the opportunity of proving them in action, and this requires something external to himself."

"Then there is this further point of superiority: in the virtues of practical life we compass something, more or less, beyond the exercise of the virtuous habits; we are just for the sake of being just, no doubt, but we also

possession of knowledge gives more pleasure than its acquisition, is very questionable. It is opposed to his principle of the superiority of activity to power, state or condition, and also to common experience. Butler is right in saying that it is in getting knowledge, and not in having it that true pleasure consists.

¹⁸ ἡ τε λεγομένη αὐτάρχεια περὶ τὴν θεωρητικὴν μάλιστα ἂν εἴη. 1177, a 27.

¹⁹ τῶν μὲν γὰρ ἀναγκαίων ἀμφοῖν χρεία καὶ ἐξ ἴσου ἔστω, εἰ καὶ μᾶλλον διαπονεῖ περὶ τὸ σῶμα ὁ πολιτικός, καὶ ὅσα τοιαῦτα· μικρὸν γὰρ ἂν τι διαφέρῃ· πρὸς δὲ τὰς ἐνεργείας πολὺ διοίσει. 1178, a 25.

²⁰ αἱ γὰρ βουλήσεις ἄδηλοι. 1178, a 30.

hope to redress an injury or punish a criminal.²¹ Abstract thought has no ulterior end. Add to all this that happiness is enjoyed in leisure and that it is for the sake of leisure that we work, and we see how superior in every respect the life of speculation must be; it is the most serious of all occupations, it looks to no results beyond its own exercise, it has its peculiar and satisfying pleasures, it is self-sufficient and capable of as much untiring prosecution as anything human can be;²² it is in short, if we give it a life long enough for its full exercise, complete happiness. A life so spent may indeed be said to be beyond the lot of man, for it is not so far forth as he is man that he lives it, but in so far as he has in him some spark of the divine; by as much as such an attribute differs from the attributes of mere human nature, by so much will the purely intellectual life differ from that of mere moral conduct. We ought not, therefore, to follow the advice of those who bid us, being mortal, to have mortal thoughts; on the contrary, so far as in us lies we should strive to be immortal and to live a life consonant to that which is best and highest in us.²³ What has been formerly said may be repeated now:—‘that which is by nature most characteristic of man is both best and happiest for him.’²⁴

²¹ ἀπὸ τῶν πρακτικῶν ἢ πλεῖον ἢ ἔλαττον περιποιούμεθα παρὰ τὴν πρᾶξιν. 1177, b 2.

²² καὶ τὸ αὐταρχες δὴ καὶ σχολαστικὸν καὶ ἄτρυτον ὡς ἀνθρώπων, καὶ ὅσα ἄλλα τῷ μακαρίῳ ἀπονέμεται. 1177, b 22.

²³ οὐ χρὴ δὲ κατὰ τοὺς παραινοῦντας ἀνθρώπινα φρονεῖν ἀνθρωπον ὄντα οὐδὲ θνητὰ τὸν θνητόν, ἀλλ’ ἐφ’ ὅσον ἐνδέχεται ἀθανατίζειν καὶ πάντα ποιεῖν πρὸς τὸ ζῆν κατὰ τὸ κράτιστον τῶν ἐν αὐτῷ. 1177, b 31.

²⁴ τὸ γὰρ οἰκείον ἐκάστω τῇ φύσει κράτιστον καὶ ἡδιστόν ἐστιν ἐκάστω. 1178, a 5.

A life of abstract thought fulfils this condition best, and is therefore the happiest.”²⁵

Aristotle's good sense and general knowledge preserved him from the exaggerations of those who, agreeing with him in admitting the superiority of a contemplative to an active life, consider that seclusion, poverty, and self-denial to the point of asceticism are necessary to it. “A man must be well,” he says, “he must have proper food, and whatever else is necessary to comfort, together with a moderate amount of external goods.” He can live the higher life if he is moderately furnished with what civilised man requires. More than this hurts rather than helps. For the philosopher is, after all, a man.

“If further argument be needed we shall find it in the common assumptions as to the life of the Gods. No one supposes them to be just, brave or temperate,²⁶ yet every one believes them to live and therefore to put forth energy of some kind or other.²⁷ Now of the three forms of human activity open to a living being, conduct, production, thought, conduct is excluded by what has just been said; *a fortiori* production is excluded—the notion of the Gods making anything is absurd—and this leaves thought as their only remaining function.”²⁸

²⁵ καὶ τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ δὴ ὁ κατὰ τὸν νοῦν βίος, εἶπερ τοῦτο μάλιστα ἀνθρώπος. 1178, a 6.

²⁶ πράξεις δὲ ποίας ἀπονεῖμαι χρεὼν αὐτοῖς; πότερά τας δικαίας; ἢ γελοῖοι φανοῦνται συναλλάττοντες καὶ παρακαταθήκας ἀποδιδόντες καὶ ὅσα τοιαῦτα; 1178, b 10.

²⁷ ἀλλὰ μὴν ζῆν γε πάντες ὑπειλήφασιν καὶ ἐνεργεῖν ἄρα. 1178, b 18.

²⁸ τῷ δὴ ζῶντι τοῦ πράττειν ἀφαιρουμένου, ἔτι δὲ μᾶλλον τοῦ ποιεῖν, τί λείπεται πλὴν θεωρία; ὥστε ἡ τοῦ θεοῦ ἐνέργεια, μακαριότητι διαφέρουσα, θεωρητικὴ ἂν εἴη. 1178, b 20. We see how completely the Homeric anthropomorphism had

Man's life will therefore be happy in so far as it resembles this, the divine activity—happy too, we may suppose, in the regard and friendly sympathy which the Gods are likely to bestow on those who do their duty and live a life like theirs,—assuming always, as is not improbable, that they have any concern with man and his affairs.²⁹ On the other hand, life spent in the sphere of probability and in discharging the duties which society, business, and public affairs exact, can be called happy only in a secondary sense.³⁰ For the exercise of the moral virtues requires the co-operation of others in a great variety of ways; we are brought into relation with our neighbours in our dealings with them, in the services we render, in what we do to them and what we endure at their hands.³¹ Actions of this kind are

been put aside by educated men. Aristotle thinks the exercise of the moral virtues unworthy of the Gods; Homer does not hesitate to ascribe to them moral vices; Aristotle treats it as an impossible supposition that the Gods should produce anything; in Homer artistic skill is attributed to them, and in the case of Athenê and Hephæstus is a characteristic attribute. See next note.

²⁹ εἰ γάρ τις ἐπιμέλεια τῶν ἀνθρώπων ὑπὸ τῶν θεῶν γίνεται, ὥσπερ δοκεῖ. 1779, a 24. But compare what Achilles said to Priam as to the attitude of the Gods to mankind,—

ὧς γὰρ ἐπεκλώσαντο θεοὶ δειλοῖσι βροτοῖσι
ζῶειν ἀχυνμένοις· αὐτοὶ δέ τ' ἀκήδεες εἰσί.

Il. 24. 525.

³⁰ δευτέρως δ' ὁ κατὰ τὴν ἄλλην ἀρετὴν. 1178, a 9.

³¹ δίκαια γὰρ καὶ ἀνδρεῖα καὶ τὰ ἄλλα τὰ κατὰ τὰς ἄλλας ἀρετὰς πρὸς ἀλλήλους πράττομεν ἐν συναλλάγμασι καὶ χρεαίαις καὶ πράξεσι παντοίοις ἐν τε τοῖς πάθεσιν διατηροῦντες τὸ πρέπον ἐκάστῳ· ταῦτα δ' εἶναι φαίνεται πάντα ἀνθρωπικά. 1178, a 11.

largely determined by our physical constitution and have much in common with the passions; the intellectual faculty of prudence itself is closely bound up with what we call 'good conduct,' and naturally so, since its premisses are derived from the subject matter of conduct and the standard of good conduct itself is given by it.³² The principles from which prudence starts being implicated with our feelings, must belong to the composite man; the excellence of the composite man is therefore of the earth, earthy, and so must his life and happiness be. The happiness of thought is a thing apart."³³

Aristotle's conclusion with regard to happiness considered, not as an end of conduct, but as the highest good attainable by man—as the thing which alone satisfies the definition given in the beginning of the Ethics, is thus stated: "So far, then, as the exercise of pure speculation extends, so far will happiness extend; in proportion as we can say of a man that he has this faculty, to that extent we may call him happy—not conditionally or by accident, but strictly in proportion to his exercise of his theoretic power. So that happiness is a kind of speculation."³⁴

³² ἔνια δὲ καὶ συμβαίνειν ἀπὸ τοῦ σώματος δοκεῖ, καὶ πολλὰ συνωκειῶσθαι τοῖς πάθεσιν ἢ τοῦ ἡθους ἀρετῇ. συνέζευκται δὲ καὶ ἡ φρόνησις τῇ τοῦ ἡθους ἀρετῇ, καὶ αὕτη τῇ φρονήσσει, εἴπερ αἱ μὲν τῆς φρονήσεως ἀρχαὶ κατὰ τὰς ἡθικὰς εἰσιν ἀρετάς, τὸ δ' ὀρθὸν τῶν ἡθικῶν κατὰ τὴν φρόνησιν. 1178, a 14.

³³ συνηρημέναι δ' αὐταὶ καὶ τοῖς πάθεσι περὶ τὸ σύνθετον ἂν εἶεν· καὶ ὁ βίος δὴ ὁ κατὰ ταύτας καὶ ἡ εὐδαιμονία. ἡ δὲ τοῦ νοῦ κεχωρισμένη. 1178, a 19.

³⁴ ἐφ' ὅσον δὴ διατείνει ἡ θεωρία, καὶ ἡ εὐδαιμονία, καὶ οἷς μάλιστα ὑπάρχει τὸ θεωρεῖν, καὶ εὐδαιμονεῖν, οὐ κατὰ συμβεβηκὸς ἀλλὰ κατὰ τὴν θεωρίαν—ὥστ' εἴη ἂν ἡ εὐδαιμονία θεωρία τις. 1178, b 28.

CHAPTER 9.—The ninth and last chapter of this book is an Appendix to the Ethics and a connecting link between that work and the Politics. “It is not enough, Aristotle observes, to know the nature of good conduct by doctrinal exposition; teaching has its place, and a highly useful although limited one; it can predispose and stimulate young men of liberal dispositions to do what they should; given a character with a natural tendency in the right direction it can inspire its possessor with a love of virtue.³⁵ But with regard to the mass of mankind it is powerless; fear and punishment are the only teachers they will listen to,³⁶ as they have no taste for true pleasure and no conception of nobility of character;³⁷ in their case we must be content if under the influence of favourable surroundings they may become even partially good.

“The mind of such hearers must therefore be cultivated by teaching and reasoning (natural goodness cannot be relied on) to take pleasure and to feel pain in right objects, just as the ground is prepared for the seed. And inasmuch as it is disagreeable to the majority of men to live self-restrained lives, education, and especially the

³⁵ ἡθός τ' εὐγενὲς καὶ ὡς ἀληθῶς φιλόκαλον ποιῆσαι ἂν κατοκώχμον ἐκ τῆς ἀρετῆς. 1179, b 8.

³⁶ Athenê in the Eumenides advises her people to rely on these inducements to orderly conduct, for “who will keep within the law,” she says, “who has nothing to fear?” Moral suasion is not to be trusted;

καὶ μὴ τὸ δεινὸν πᾶν πόλεως ἔξω βαλεῖν.

τίς γὰρ δεδοικῶς μηδὲν ἐνδικὸς βροτῶν;

Æschy. Eum. 698.

³⁷ τοῦ δὲ καλοῦ καὶ ὡς ἀληθῶς ἡδέος οὐδ' ἔννοιαν ἔχουσιν, ἄγευστοι ὄντες. 1179, b 15.

education of the young, must be entrusted to the law; the law should prescribe their diet and mode of life from their early years: and even this is not enough, the discipline must be continued throughout middle age and on to the close of life." 38

"There are some who think, continues Aristotle, that it is the duty of the legislator not only to exhort and encourage the good but to take sharp punitive measures with the bad, and to banish those who are incorrigible. 39 If this be so, our future citizen, if he is to be worth anything, must in the first place be trained in good habits at the outset; then he should be compelled to live in circumstances and under regulations which will carry out his early training, and this in such a way that whether he likes it or not it will be impossible for him to go wrong. 40

"This requires a scientifically organised moral education of a coercive kind—in a word, state training under the authority of law. Law alone has the requisite force behind it,—we must of course assume intelligent laws of a practical kind 41 framed by statesmen who know their psychology; the ordinary father of a family does not know enough, nor are the rules of family life sufficiently rigid for moral training;—children, like everybody else, resent a personal opposition to their wishes,

38 οὐκ ἱκανὸν δ' ἴσως νέους ὄντας τροφῆς καὶ ἐπιμελείας τυχεῖν ὀρθῆς, ἀλλ' ἐπειδὴ καὶ ἀνδρωθέντας δεῖ ἐπιτηδεύειν αὐτὰ καὶ ἐθίζεσθαι, καὶ περὶ ταῦτα δεοίμεθ' ἂν νόμων, καὶ ὅλως δὴ περὶ πάντα τὸν βίον. 1180, a 1.

39 1180, a 5 sqq.

40 τὸν ἐσόμενον ἀγαθὸν τραφῆναι καλῶς δεῖ καὶ ἐθισθῆναι, εἴθ' οὕτως ἐν ἐπιτηδεύμασιν ἐπιεικέσι ζῆν καὶ μήτ' ἄκοντα μήθ' ἔκοντα πράττειν τὰ φαῦλα. 1180, a 14.

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39 1180, a 5 sqq.

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41 λόγος ἀπὸ τινος φρονήσεως καὶ νοῦ. 1180, a 21.

even when it is for their good, but no such feeling is aroused by the action of public law.⁴²

“Unfortunately most states (Lacedæmon and a few others excepted) do not conceive the training of citizens to be a part of their function; they allow each man to bring up his family as he chooses, like the Cyclops in the *Odyssey*. State education is, however, the best.⁴³

Where state education is impracticable, home training must take its place as a second best.⁴⁴ To make this effective, however, the father of the family must consider himself in the light of a legislator; he must act on general rules, remembering that parental advice and domestic habits correspond to public law and state training. And there are advantages in home education which go far to counterbalance its defects: in the first place, you start on the common ground of natural affection and obedience,⁴⁵ a feeling which does not exist in the case of law; next the father of a family can do what no law can do—he can adapt his teaching and discipline to the particular case; but to do this effectively he must not be a mere empiric; he should have that general knowledge of his subject which we expect in a doctor

⁴² καὶ τῶν μὲν ἀνθρώπων ἐχθαίρουσι τοὺς ἐναντιομένους ταῖς ὁρμαῖς, καὶ ὁρθῶς αὐτὸ δρῶσιν· ὁ δὲ νόμος οὐκ ἔστιν ἐπαχθῆς τάττων τὸ ἐπιεικές. 1180, a 22. The respect of good citizens for law is strikingly illustrated in Plato's *Krito*, 50 A. See page 573 post, note 67.

⁴³ κράτιστον μὲν οὖν τὸ γένεσθαι κοινὴν ἐπιμέλειαν καὶ ὁρθήν. 1180, a 29.

⁴⁴ κοινῇ δ' ἐξαμελουμένων ἐκάστῳ δόξειεν ἂν προσήκειν τοῖς σφετέροις τέκνοις καὶ φίλοις εἰς ἀρετὴν συμβάλλεσθαι. 1180, a 30.

⁴⁵ προϋπάρχουσι γὰρ στέργοντες καὶ εὐπειθεῖς τῇ φύσει. 1180, b 6.

or other expert ⁴⁶—he must take the legislator's point of view. Specialists are all very well, but they must have general and scientific knowledge also, and the father of the family is an educational specialist of a kind." ⁴⁷

"The course of the preceding remarks leads to this: how can a man acquire the law-making faculty which is so necessary whether education is undertaken by the state or by private persons? To whom is he to go for information on this point? If we are to be guided by the analogy of other arts and sciences we should refer him to the political expert, especially as conduct falls within the competence of political science.⁴⁸ But there is a difference between politicians and other experts. In other matters of professional skill the teacher is also a practitioner—doctors, for example, and painters—but the teacher in politics is a Professor who takes no part in affairs, whilst practical politicians who do, rely on natural ability and experience rather than on grounds of reason; they neither speak nor write on politics nor impart their own accomplishments to their children or friends, which would be a much better thing for them to do than making speeches in the courts or in

⁴⁶ ἐξακριβοῦσθαι δὴ δόξειεν ἂν μᾶλλον τὸ καθ' ἕκαστον ἰδιὰς τῆς ἐπιμελείας γινομένης· μᾶλλον γὰρ τοῦ προσφόρου τυγγάνει ἕκαστος. ἀλλ' ἐπιμεληθεῖν μὲν ἄριστα καθ' ἕν καὶ ἱατροῦ καὶ γυμναστῆς καὶ πᾶς ἄλλος ὁ καθόλου εἰδώς. 1180, b 11. Compare what is said in Book V. c. 10, page 314, on the inability of law to adapt measures to special circumstances.

⁴⁷ τάχα δὲ τῷ βουλομένῳ δι' ἐπιμελείας βελτίους ποιεῖν, εἴτε πολλοὺς εἴτ' ὀλίγους, νομοθετικῇ πειρατέον γένεσθαι, εἰ διὰ νόμων ἀγαθοὶ γένοίμεθ' ἂν. 1180, b 23.

⁴⁸ ἢ καθάπερ ἐπὶ τῶν ἄλλων, παρὰ τῶν πολιτικῶν; μύριον γὰρ ἐδόκει τῆς πολιτικῆς εἶναι. 1118, b 29. Cf. 1194, b 10.

the Assembly.⁴⁹ "I repeat," continues Aristotle, "what I have already said as to the incompetence of these Professors to teach the art of politics, and especially that important branch of it which we are now considering—the art of legislation; they neither know their subject from the practical nor yet from the theoretic side, in fact they do not know what their subject is, or they would not have maintained it to be the same as rhetoric or even worse, nor would they have thought it easy to legislate by making a selection of the best laws, forgetting that the selection itself constitutes the whole difficulty of the case!⁵⁰ Thoroughly to judge a work of art you must know, not only whether the product is good or bad, but the nature of the processes which produced it. Any one can tell how a dish tastes, but only the cook knows how it is made. Now we are dealing with law-making; laws are the products of the political art, and to suppose that a man can know how a law should be made by reading other laws is as if we were to suppose that a man can become a doctor by reading a collection of prescriptions or be able to cook a dinner by reading a cookery book.⁵¹ It follows that a collection of laws

⁴⁹ τὰ δὲ πολιτικὰ ἐπαγγέλλονται μὲν διδάσκειν οἱ σοφισταί, πράττει δ' αὐτῶν οὐδεὶς, ἀλλ' οἱ πολιτευόμενοι, οἱ δόξειεν ἂν δυνάμει τινι τοῦτο πράττειν καὶ ἐμπειρία, μᾶλλον ἢ διανοία, οὔτε γὰρ γράφοντες οὔτε λέγοντες περὶ τῶν τοιούτων φαίνονται καίτοι κάλλιον ἦν ἴσως, ἢ λόγους δικανικοὺς τε καὶ δημηγορι-
λούς. 1180, b 35.

⁵⁰ οὐδ' ἂν ᾤοντο ῥάδιον εἶναι τὸ νομοθετῆσαι συναγαγόντι τοὺς εὐδοκιμοῦντας τῶν νόμων· ἐκλέξασθαι γὰρ εἶναι τοὺς ἀρίστους, ὥσπερ οὐδὲ τὴν ἐκλογὴν οὔσαν συνέσειω καὶ τὸ κρίναι ὀρθῶς μέγιστον. 1181, a 15.

⁵¹ οἱ δὲ νόμοι τῆς πολιτικῆς ἔργοις ἰοίκασιν· πῶς οὖν ἐκ τούτων νομοθετικὸς γένοιτ' ἂν τις, ἢ τοὺς ἀρίστους κρίναι; οὐ

and constitutions may be useful, but only to those who are properly prepared for the task of legislation by scientific and practical knowledge; those who are not so furnished will be unable to form any correct judgment from such a collection, unless by mere chance, although their wits may be sharpened by the study." 52

"Inasmuch, however, as former writers," Aristotle concludes, "have not investigated this question of law-making, it will perhaps be well for us to undertake it together with that of the forms of Governments in order that our philosophy relating to man may as far as possible be completed. First of all, then, we will endeavour to follow up anything our predecessors have said to the purpose on any part of this subject; next from the collection of Constitutions we will consider what preserves and what destroys states in general or in particular instances, and why some states are well and others ill-governed. By this means we may possibly better come to see both what kind of constitution is the best, and under what form of constitution laws and customs each state may be well ordered." 53

γὰρ φαίνονται οὐδ' ἰατρικοὶ ἐκ τῶν συγγραμμάτων γίνεσθαι.
1181, a 23.

52 ἴσως οὖν καὶ τῶν νόμων καὶ τῶν πολιτείων αἱ συναγωγαὶ τοῖς μὲν δυναμένοις θεωρῆσαι καὶ κρῖναι τι καλῶς ἢ τοῦναντίον καὶ ποῖα ποίοις ἀρμόττει εὐχρηστ' ἂν εἴη· τοῖς δ' ἄνευ ἕξεως τὰ τοιαῦτα διεξιούσι τὸ μὲν κρῖναι καλῶς οὐκ ἂν ὑπάρχοι, εἰ μὴ ἄρα αὐτόματον, εὐσυνετώτεροι δ' εἰς τὰντα ταχ' ἂν γένοιοντο.
1181, b 6.

53 παραλιπόντων οὖν τῶν προτέρων ἀνερεύτητον τὸ περὶ τῆς νομοθεσίας, αὐτοὺς ἐπισκέψασθαι μᾶλλον βέλτιον ἴσως, καὶ ὅλως δὴ περὶ πολιτείας, ὅπως εἰς δύναμιν ἢ περὶ τὰ ἀνθρώπεια φιλοσοφία τελειωθῇ. πρῶτον μὲν οὖν εἴ τι κατὰ μέρος εἴρηται καλῶς ὑπὸ τῶν προγενεστέρων πειραθῶμεν ἐπελθεῖν, εἴτα ἐκ τῶν

συνηγμένων πολιτειῶν θεωρῆσαι τὰ ποῖα σφύζει καὶ φθείρει τὰς πόλεις καὶ τὰ ποῖα ἐκάστας τῶν πολιτειῶν, καὶ διὰ τίνας αἰτίας αἱ μὲν καλῶς αἱ δὲ τοῦναντίον πολιτεύονται. θεωρηθέντων γὰρ τούτων τάχ' ἂν μᾶλλον συνίδοιμεν καὶ ποία πολιτεία ἀρίστη, καὶ πῶς ἐκάστη ταχθεῖσα, καὶ τίσι νόμοις καὶ ἔθεσι χρωμένῃ. 1181, b 12.

REMARKS

ARISTOTLE'S theory of happiness may be stated in the following propositions:—

1. Happiness is the end or final cause of man's being; it consists in his doing the work which he was specially intended by nature to do.

2. This end or work may be ascertained by finding out the special faculty of man. To do this we must not add up his various faculties and look at the resulting total; we must have regard only to that one by which he is distinguished from all other animals; his happiness will be found in the exercise of that particular faculty.

3. The distinctive characteristic human faculty is the power of mediate reasoning, which power owing to the twofold division of the rational part of the soul, takes the form of inference either from necessary or from possible or probable data.

4. There are, therefore, two kinds of happiness resulting from the exercise of two distinct characteristic rational powers, and corresponding to these powers in the order of their relative importance.

5. The highest happiness qualified as "that which belongs to man, but not *quâ* man," results from and corresponds to the exercise of speculative reason, whose faculty is wisdom and whose result is science or "knowledge of the cause"; this result is arrived at by demonstration from principles which are immediately and intuitively

apprehended, undemonstrable, universal, essential, and commensurate with the conclusions drawn from them; the secondary happiness qualified as "human" results from and corresponds to the exercise of deliberative reason whose faculty is prudence and whose result is practical truth, arrived at by reasoning from possible or probable premisses and never more certain than the data from which it is derived.

This view of happiness which forms the coping-stone of the Ethics fits in with and is based on principles established in Aristotle's Psychology, Logic, Physics and Metaphysics. Complete or not, it is part of a connected body of truth which he conceived himself to have demonstrated in the course of his encyclopædic studies and writings.

Although Aristotle's purpose was in the main practical—designed to show men how they might become happy according to their opportunities and capacities, it can scarcely be doubted that one of his objects was the reconciliation of the long standing quarrel between philosophy and active life insisted upon with such a variety of illustration by Plato in the Republic, the Gorgias, the Protagoras, the Theætetus and elsewhere. Philosophy in the person of Sokrates is represented by Plato as dissenting altogether from the current views of justice, truth, happiness, and the like. In the Gorgias Sokrates proclaims his complete isolation in the strongest terms, saying that he believes himself to be one of the very few men at Athens, not to say the only one, who understands and can practise the true political art—an art which it may be observed includes conduct.⁵⁴

⁵⁴ οἶμαι μετ' ὀλίγων Ἀθηναίων, ἵνα μὴ εἴπω μόνος, ἐπιχίρειν τῇ ὥς ἀληθῶς πολιτικῇ τέχνῃ καὶ πράττειν τὰ πολιτικὰ μόνος τῶν νῦν. Gorg. 521 D. μαρτυρήσουσί σοι, ἐὰν μὲν βούλῃ, Νικίας ὁ Νικηράτου καὶ οἱ ἀδελφοὶ μετ'

As the result of this independence he says that he expects ridicule and ill-usage at the hands of his fellow-citizens, and that he must look to the judgment of Minos, Æacus, and Rhadamanthus in the afterworld to redress the hardships and injustices of the present. Now this view of the incompatibility between the higher and the ordinary life was one with which Aristotle did not agree and which he set himself to controvert. There is no discrepancy, in his opinion, between the highest life which we can attain to—the one most nearly approaching to what we must presume to be the life of the Gods, and one passed in the discharge of the ordinary duties of home and of citizenship. Abstract knowledge, the proper function of the theorising intellect, is doubtless the only subject in which a philosopher can be expected to interest himself, and in it he can find so much true pleasure as is attainable in a world in which chance, necessity, and the refractory nature of matter have to be reckoned with; but he is not therefore compelled to stand aloof and apart; he may still live in the world, mix with his fellows, and conform by his own choice to the social and ethical standards which he finds around him.⁵⁵

The man who is not a philosopher and who has neither the desire nor the capacity for the highest mental pursuits will be happy if he conducts himself well. Good conduct is an end in itself and has an independent value. In

αὐτοῦ, ὧν οἱ τρίποδες οἱ ἐφεξῆς ἐστῶτές εἰσιν ἐν τῷ Διονυσίῳ, ἔάν τε βούλῃ Ἀριστοκράτης ὁ Σκελλίου, οὗ αὖ ἐστὶν ἐν Πυθοῖ τοῦτο τὸ καλὸν ἀνάθημα, ἔάν τε βούλῃ ἡ Περικλέους ὄλη οἰκία ἢ ἄλλη συγγένεια, ἥντινα ἂν βούλῃ τῶν ἐνθάδε ἐκλέξασθαι. ἀλλ' ἐγὼ σοι εἶς ὧν οὐκ ὁμολογῶ. Gorg. 472 A-B.

55 ἧ δ' ἀνθρωπός ἐστι καὶ πλείοσι συζῆ αἰρεῖται τὰ κατὰ τὴν ἀρετὴν πράττειν. 1178, b 5.

saying this, Aristotle does not lay down any absolute standard, objective or subjective, of what is right, nor does he appeal to any sense of duty, moral obligation or other rule applicable to all times and places. The obligation which he recognises is the creature of custom, of education and of habitual obedience to law. Such moral discipline admits of wide varieties in the mode of handling, just as medical treatment does. Practical intelligence gives the rule; "ethical right is determined by prudence,"⁵⁶ and prudence takes its colour from the social medium in which it is generated and developed.

This was a view widely held, and Aristotle thought that it had reason on its side. "In the sphere of morals, in matters of justice, holiness and the contrary," says Sokrates in the *Theætetus*, "there are those who boldly maintain that there is no natural or essential basis, but that what is generally believed is true when and so long as it is believed."⁵⁷

Such a belief undoubtedly prevailed and still prevails, and Aristotle held it although Sokrates and Plato did not. As a matter of fact the man who conforms to the moral standard of his time and country and lives a good life according to that standard counts himself and is accounted by others good, and happy so far as goodness can make him so. Aristotle finds a philosophical justification for

⁵⁶ εἴπερ αἱ μὲν τῆς φρονήσεως ἀρχαὶ κατὰ τὰς ἠθικάς εἰσιν ἀρετάς, τὸ δ' ὀρθὸν τῶν ἠθικῶν κατὰ τὴν φρόνησιν. 1178, a 17.

⁵⁷ ἀλλ' ἐκεῖ οὗ λέγω, ἐν τοῖς δικάοις καὶ ἀδίκοις καὶ ὁσίοις καὶ ἀνοσίοις, ἐθέλουσιν ἰσχυρίζεσθαι ὥς οὐκ ἔστι φύσει ἀντῶν οὐδὲν οὐσίαν ἑαυτοῦ ἔχον, ἀλλὰ τὸ κοινῇ δόξαν τοῦτο γίγνεται ἀληθές τότε, ὅταν δόξη καὶ ὅσον ἂν δοκῇ χρόνον. Plato, *Theæt.* 172 B.

this common belief in his theory of the function and end of prudence or deliberative intelligence. It was therefore not necessary, he thought, for a man of high ideals who desired a rule of conduct to assume the uncompromising attitude of a social dissenter, and to live a martyr life in this world trusting to the judgment on appeal of Minos, Rhadamanthus, and Æacus in the next. He would be able to justify his acquiescence in what the city thinks⁵⁸ on a definite principle—namely that of acting in conformity to the dictates of practical reason. But Aristotle not only wished to bring philosophy into line with common sense; he also wished, as he so often does, to harmonise divergent current opinions by bringing them within the scope of a general conception or scientific point of view. He held to the opinion that there must be a kernel of truth in whatever is believed either by the ignorant many or the wise few. He found on the subject of happiness many such beliefs—some of them popular, some backed only by the opinion of eminent teachers and accredited authorities past and present—Solon, Simonides, Protagoras, Prodicus, Eudoxus and others,—as for instance, the belief that happiness consisted in a life of pleasure; that wealth or honour could procure it; that a good man might be happy even under extreme misfortune or physical suffering; that happiness was an apathy or state of quietness, or that it could only be found in the contemplation of absolute Being in the world of forms. There is something, he considered, in each of these aspects of the case; each calls attention to some

⁵⁸ The historical Sokrates is said by Xenophon to have accepted this rule; ἡ τε γὰρ Πυθία νόμῳ πόλεως ἀναιρεῖ ποιοῦντας εὐσεβῶς ἂν ποιεῖν, Σωκράτης τε οὕτω καὶ αὐτὸς ἐποίει καὶ τοὺς ἄλλους παρήνει. Xen. Commen. i. 3. 1.

attribute of happiness or to some ingredient in it of which account should be taken, and he accordingly reduces them to order by a psychological analysis supplemented by a teleological theory.

By this means Aristotle found room for all views deserving consideration. His theory of good conduct developed in the preceding books, with its resulting pleasure, embraced that amount of truth which was contained in the practical and popular view of life; it showed why those who act under the guidance of prudence are happy; it is because they are making the best use of the highest rational faculty which can operate in that particular sphere; theirs is a "happiness for man" regarded as a being made up of hopes, fears, desires and passions, living and working in a field in which necessity, chance and nature modify or control his own initiative. His theory of absolute happiness, on the other hand, corresponds to those higher impulses which lead an exceptional man out of himself and the world around him into the region of pure thought, where he can live a life such as the Gods may be supposed to live, fettered only by the necessity of satisfying indispensable physical wants and performing the duties which citizenship and society exact of every man. This life—in the world but not of it—was as near as Aristotle's temperament permitted him to come to the *ὁμοιώσις θεῶ*—"likeness to God," a condition to be attained, according to Plato, only by escaping from the world below into the region of absolute existence and pure form.⁵⁹ Aristotle thought that the view of a happiness only realisable by flying from existing condi-

⁵⁹ διὸ καὶ πειρᾶσθαι χρὴ ἐνθένδε ἐκῆσε φεύγειν ὃ τι τάχιστα · φυγῇ δὲ ὁμοιώσις θεῶ κατὰ τὸ δυνατόν · ὁμοιώσις δὲ δίκαιον καὶ ὅσιον μετὰ φρονήσεως γένεσθαι. Plato, *Theæt.* 176 A-B.

tions and contemplating real Being by the light of the Idea of Good, wanted actuality; it was not within the range of man's power—it was not *πρακτὸν* or *κτητὸν ἀνθρώπου*. He accordingly provided an alternative in a life devoted to pure science as defined in the Posterior Analytics. Readers of that work will admit that a man's taste for abstract knowledge must be very pronounced if it cannot be satisfied by the subjects, studied by the methods there indicated. Happiness for the majority of mankind is more easily compassed. Given favourable conditions—for every one has to ask something of Nature and Fortune—a statesman with a free hand can so mould the character of his citizens, of all at least who are not incapacitated by natural defects, misteaching or ignoble pursuits, that they may either be persuaded or compelled to live the life that will make them happy. This is the life for the mass of mankind, and it constitutes for them the end of conduct.⁶⁰

It is natural, many will consider it inevitable, to ask how far, if at all, is the Aristotelian ideal of the supremely happy life of practical value to us? It can hardly stand side by side with the Christian ideal, although there are some striking points of similarity between them. In both, many are called but few are chosen; in both, the life to be compassed is one higher than the life of the world,—in Aristotle's language it is one “which a man will live, not so far forth as he is a man, but by virtue of some divine element implanted in him”;⁶¹ Aristotle, no less than

⁶⁰ εἴη δ' ἂν καὶ πολὺκοινον· δυνατὸν γὰρ ὑπάρξαι πᾶσι τοῖς μὴ πεπηρωμένοις πρὸς ἀρετὴν διὰ τινος μαθήσεως καὶ ἐπιμελείας. 1099, b 18.

⁶¹ ὁ δὲ τοιοῦτος ἂν εἴη βίος κρείττων ἢ κατ' ἀνθρώπον· οὐ γὰρ ἢ ἀνθρωπός ἐστιν οὕτω βιώσεται, ἀλλ' ἢ θεῖόν τι ἐν αὐτῷ ὑπάρχει. 1177, b 26.

the Christian teacher, exhorts his hearers "to be as immortal as possible and in all things to aim at living according to that which is best in him; ⁶² in both the ideal is expressly modelled on a godlike life; it is in both one in which human hopes and fears and the exercise of human virtues find a place, subordinate according to Aristotle, and only rendered necessary by the fact that the perfectly happy man is still a man. ⁶³ In the Aristotelian as in the Christian teaching the exemplar is to be found in the skies, but brought down to earth and modified by the necessity of living and acting under material conditions.

But the differences are quite as strongly marked as the agreements. Poverty, humility, meekness, self-discipline, love for mankind in general, forgiveness of injuries and a readiness to return good for evil, find no place in Aristotle's picture, and would indeed have been considered as inconsistent with the character of a free man in a Greek State. Both the happy and the happiest man are conceived by Aristotle as living vigorous lives in the exercise of all their powers physical as well as mental. They have to hold their place in the world, not by submission, if that were possible, but by claiming their due and maintaining it, if necessary, by force.

Religion apart, in the modern view the highest intellectual life has a wider scope than that assigned to it by Aristotle. The external conditions which favour it are indeed the same—good conduct, moderate means and the help of others, but we do not limit either its subject matter

⁶² ἐφ' ὅσον ἐνδέχεται ἀθανατίζειν καὶ πάντα ποιεῖν πρὸς τὸ ζῆν κατὰ τὸ κράτιστον τῶν ἐν αὐτῷ. 1177, b 33.

⁶³ ἢ δ' ἄνθρωπος ἐστὶ καὶ πλείοσι συζῆ, αἰρεῖται τὰ κατὰ τὴν ἀρετὴν πράττειν· δεῖσεται οὖν τῶν τοιούτων πρὸς τὸ ἀνθρωπεύεσθαι. 1178, b 5.

or the faculties employed within the bounds within which the Greek thinker confined them. To him deductive reasoning from assumed universal and immediate principles seemed to be the highest exercise of the mind. No such assumption is made now, either in theory or practice. Many, perhaps most, of the best modern intellects are more engaged in establishing principles than in reasoning from them. And there are many fields in which men of the highest powers are now content to work which Aristotle would have thought beneath the notice of any one who aimed at exercising his mind in the best way. These, however, are details. Aristotle's theory in principle amounts to this : if you want to live a life in which you get the most pleasure with the least pain, in which you will find the most continuous and absorbing occupation, in which you will be as little as possible dependent on others for your enjoyment and in which you will be least open to the attacks of fortune—

“ the whips and scorns of time

The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,

The pangs of despised love, the law's delay ”—

you must live a student's life. And it is by no means certain that he is not right. The monks who spent a placid if somewhat colourless existence in copying manuscripts, or the scholars who give their years to collating them, might each make out a very good case in respect of the balance of pleasure and pain ; and the same may be probably said for those who devote themselves to scientific research or to the higher walks of literature. Men whose circumstances or temperament force them into active life must be content with a more precarious happiness, if the Aristotelian tests are to be admitted. The rewards of a political life are doubtless great : it is pleasant to command the applause of listening Senates and to read your

speeches in the newspapers, but as Aristotle says, this life seems somewhat superficial;⁶⁴ the life of the successful physician, surgeon, or lawyer, one half of which is spent in laborious preparation for a future in which the pressure of work barely leaves him time to live, would have been considered by Aristotle as neither complete, self-sufficient, nor tolerable.

The last chapter of the book points out the means by which practical effect is to be given to the object of making men happy. That happiness is to be gained by good conduct only, is here considered to be sufficiently proven. Aristotle assumes, therefore, that the object of the legislator will be to make men good. This, he says, is the intention of every legislator, and those who do not carry it out go wrong.⁶⁵ He assumed, moreover, that it was within the competence of the statesman to do this. He considered the citizen body to be modifiable to almost any extent by law and public training. When we remember how small was the population even of Athens, as compared with the States of which we are accustomed to think, that its citizens lived much in common, that they were brought into frequent contact with one another, that there was but little public religious dissent and much respect for law, this assumption of the power of the legislator to create a common type of character will not appear entirely unfounded, especially as the State was supposed to be both able and willing to expel all those who obstinately refused to submit to its regulations. Nor should it be

⁶⁴ οἱ δὲ χαρίεντες καὶ πρακτικοὶ τιμὴν · τοῦ γὰρ πολιτικοῦ βίου σχεδὸν τοῦτο τέλος. φαίνεται δ' ἐπιπολαιώτερον εἶναι τοῦ ζητουμένου. 1095, b 22.

⁶⁵ οἱ γὰρ νομοθεταὶ τοὺς πολίτας ἐθίζοντες ποιοῦσιν ἀγαθοὺς, καὶ τὸ μὲν βούλημα παντὸς νομοθέτου τοῦτ' ἐστίν, ὅσοι δὲ μὴ εὖ αὐτὸ ποιοῦσιν ἀμαρτάνουσιν. 1103, b 3.

forgotten that Aristotle had before him the example of Lacedæmon in which the experiment had been tried, and with signal success, during a longer period of time than the constitutional history of any other Greek State extended over. Lacedæmon was to the political theorists of the fourth century what England was to the political theorists of the eighteenth century—a constitution with a brilliant record going far into the past which had escaped or surmounted the revolutions which had overthrown the Governments of so many other States; and in Lacedæmon a rigorous discipline moulded the character of her citizens from childhood to the grave. If any doubts could exist as to the power of law and custom, here was an answer to those doubts. Aristotle assumed moreover, probably on the same grounds, that this public discipline would be freely acquiesced in. “Men dislike opposition to their inclinations,” he says, “when the opposition comes from other men, even if it be for their good; but the law enjoining what is right rouses no such resentment.”⁶⁶ That a citizen living under the protection of the law and availing himself of the law when it happens to suit his interest or inclination, should consider himself morally justified, and should even be justified by others, in breaking any particular law which he happens to dislike, was a view of the case which had not occurred to Aristotle.⁶⁷

⁶⁶ καὶ τῶν μὲν ἀνθρώπων ἐχθαίρουσι τοὺς ἐναντιουμένους ταῖς ὁρμαῖς, κὰν ὀρθῶς αὐτὸ δρῶσιν· ὁ δὲ νόμος οὐκ ἔστιν ἐπαχθῆς τάττων τὸ ἐπιεικές. 1180, a 22.

⁶⁷ Plato in the *Krito* has put in a striking way the duty of obedience to law in the form of a supposed dialogue between the Laws of Athens and Sokratês: Εἰ μέλλουσιν ἡμῖν ἐνθένδε εἶτε ἀποδιδράσκειν, εἴθ' ὅπως δεῖ ὀνομάσαι τοῦτο, ἐλθόντες οἱ νόμοι καὶ τὸ κοινὸν τῆς πόλεως ἐπιστάντες ἔροιντο,

His idea of the permissible limits of State action was, moreover, extremely wide. Not only did such subjects as war and peace, diplomatic action and the protection of life and property fall within it, but teaching also, including the determination of the subjects to be taught and the right to say how far any given person was to be allowed to learn them. If we add to these duties the regulation of daily life, moral training and the inculcation of reverence for the Gods whom the city honoured, it will be seen that Aristotle's statesman came to his task armed with powers and under responsibilities which no modern Government possesses or would wish to possess.

How he was to be fitted to perform it we are not definitely told. Aristotle does not require the laborious training of thirty-five years which Plato thought necessary for the rulers of his model Republic, but, like Plato, he requires a mixture of theory and practice. An educated medical man, he says, in addition to a special knowledge of his own department ought to have a general knowledge of the anatomy, physiology, and pathology of the whole body; the law maker, like the medical practitioner whom he so much resembles, must know the sciences relating to man and must have a sufficient acquaintance with psychology together with practical training in public affairs. Law is, or should be, the product of scientific knowledge backed by practical intelligence. Aristotle did not at all believe in the

Ἐιπέ μοι, ὦ Σώκρατες, τί ἐν τῷ νῷ ἔχεις ποιεῖν; ἄλλο τι ἢ τοῦτω τῷ ἔργῳ ᾧ ἐπιχειρεῖς, διανοεῖ τοὺς τε νόμους ἡμᾶς ἀπολέσαι καὶ ξύμπασαν τὴν πόλιν τὸ σὸν μέρος; ἢ δοκεῖ σοι διόν τε εἶναι ἔτι ἐκείνην τὴν πόλιν εἶναι καὶ μὴ ἀνατετράφθαι, ἐν ᾗ ἂν αἱ γενόμεναι δίκαι μὴδὲν ἰσχύωσιν, ἀλλὰ ὑπὸ ἰδιωτῶν ἄκυροί τε γένωνται καὶ διαφθείρωνται; Plato, *Krito* 50 A, sqq.

popular method of teaching men how to make laws. He had a poor opinion of the Professors who, like Gorgias, Protagoras, and others, undertook to teach politics; he says plainly that they neither understood their subject nor its application;⁶⁸ he thinks a practical man with a general education, assisted by a collection of laws and constitutions, would arrive at better results by independent study.

The end which a legislator so equipped ought to have in view is State Education, meaning by that the formation of character; not knowledge for its own sake or the art of making money and getting on in life, but the creation of law-abiding citizens who would listen to reason and conduct themselves well. Aristotle was anxious to rescue education from the errors and inconsistencies of home and private teaching carried out on no principle, and to put in its place definite public discipline and training intelligently conducted and directed to the one end of making men happy by making them good. For this, however, he did not rely exclusively on the influence of law; he relied greatly on the social atmosphere—the general opinion of right and wrong generated by the traditions and circumstances of the community—an influence in many cases more powerful than positive law. We need not look far to see that there are many people who have no hesitation in breaking a positive law, whom no consideration would induce to do what is contrary to “good form.”

Aristotle's conception of the end of the State and of the means by which it might be attained was in general agreement with that of Plato, but his theoretical

⁶⁸ τῶν δὲ σοφιστῶν οἱ ἐπαγγελλόμενοι λίαν φαίνονται πόρρω εἶναι τοῦ διδάξαι. ὅλως γὰρ οὐδὲ ποῖόν τι ἐστὶν ἢ περὶ ποῖα ἴσασιν. 1181, a 20.

assumptions are not the same and he works out the details differently. Both these eminent men were at one in their distrust of the political methods of their time and in their contempt of rhetoric as an instrument in politics; both wished to reform the legislature by substituting educated intelligence for mere empiricism, and both thought that such a reform might result in a system of public education by which men might be made better and happier than before. Whether we agree with them or not in thinking this possible we cannot but approve their effort to lift politics out of the region of partisan recrimination and rhetorical debate and to indicate a definite end of statesmanship.

The problem of public education, the difficulties of which both acknowledge, is a much more perplexing question for the modern statesman than it was for them, owing to the greater complexity of society and the multiplication of conflicting aims and opinions resulting therefrom. Aristotle could count on practical unanimity as to the ultimate object which the state should have in view in training its citizens. It was no other than the end of conduct, and every one, he tells us, gentle and simple alike, agreed that this is happiness and that happiness meant living well and conducting yourself well.⁶⁹

The difficulties he foresaw were practical ones: how to prepare the minds of the young so as to make them easily receptive of the lessons of prudence and experience;⁷⁰ how to enforce the discipline necessary

⁶⁹ τὴν γὰρ εὐδαιμονίαν καὶ οἱ πολλοί, καὶ οἱ χαρίεντες λέγουσιν, τὸ δ' εὖ ζῆν καὶ τὸ εὖ πράττειν ταῦτόν ὑπολαμβάνουσι τῷ εὐδαιμονεῖν. 1095, a 18.

⁷⁰ ὁ δὲ λόγος καὶ ἡ διδαχὴ μὴ ποτ' οὐκ ἐν ἅπασιν ἰσχύει, ἀλλὰ δεῖ προδιεργάσθαι τοῖς ἔθουσιν τὴν τοῦ ἀκροατοῦ ψυχὴν

for the formation of good habits; how to educate the lawmakers. But the question of morals is now complicated with the question of religion and the modern statesman finds no agreement as to the end to which education should be directed, whilst his other practical difficulties have certainly not diminished. Any attempt on his part to direct public education to the formation of character is met by the objection that character depends on religious (or non-religious) convictions, and that as there is no agreement on the subject public money must not be applied to it. Education therefore, so far as the State is concerned, takes with us the form of supplying miscellaneous information to the young and leaving them to pick up what conduct they can by the way.⁷¹ This may be worth doing or it may not, but it is not education in any sense in which the word was understood either by Plato or Aristotle.

The scope of Aristotle's inquiry in the Ethics is thus limited by the State. He does not look exclusively to the happiness of the individual, nor does he look to the happiness of everybody; he is neither an Epicurean nor a Benthamite. He adopts that middle course which is so congenial to his philosophical temperament. "Assuming," he says, "that the happiness of a single citizen is the same thing as the happiness of the city, yet the latter is both on a larger scale and more complete than the former, and is therefore a nobler and more ideal end."⁷²

πρὸς τὸ καλῶς χαίρειν καὶ μισεῖν, ὥσπερ γῆν τὴν θρέψουσιν τὸ σπέρμα. 1179, b 23.

⁷¹ αὐτοὶ περιόντες νέμονται ὥσπερ ἄφειτοι, ἐάν που αὐτόματοι περιτύχῃσι τῇ ἀρετῇ. Plato, Protag. 320 A.

⁷² εἰ γὰρ καὶ ταῦτόν ἐστιν ἐνὶ καὶ πόλει, μεῖζόν γε καὶ τελειότερον τὸ τῆς πόλεως φαίνεται καὶ λαβεῖν καὶ σώζειν· ἀγαπητόν μὲν γὰρ καὶ ἐνὶ μόνῳ, κάλλιον δὲ καὶ θειότερον ἔθνει καὶ πόλεσιν. Eth. 1. 2. 1094, b 7.

Nor is this assumption in his opinion unwarranted, for in that large department of conduct over which prudence presides, "perhaps it is not possible for a man to look after his own interests without regarding the interests of his family and his city as well." ⁷³

The city state, then, is a field wide enough for the energies of the statesman who takes even the highest view of his responsibilities and duties, whilst the single citizen in furthering his own happiness cannot but promote that of the community of which he forms part. Beyond this Aristotle does not go. Universal happiness, the greatest happiness of the greatest number, is an object which he does not even look at, much less propose as one to be kept in view; it lies far beyond the horizon of practical politics, it being equally doubtful what the greatest number is and what is the greatest happiness suited to that number. An end of conduct satisfactory to Athenians, Persians, Phœnicians, and the barbarians of the shores of the Black Sea, and also attainable by them, would be of such comprehensive generality as to be useless as an object of endeavour to anybody.

The general principle on which Aristotle's theory of happiness is based as distinguished from its applications—the value of work and the superiority of an existence in which powers are exercised to one in which they are only possessed—is, however, co-extensive with the field of organic life, and so far as mankind are concerned this truth, by no means universally realised either then or now, but persistently enforced in the *Ethics*, is probably his most valuable single contribution to the theory of conduct.

⁷³ καίτοι ἴσως οὐκ ἔστι τὸ αὐτοῦ εἶναι ἄνευ οἰκονομίας οὐδ' ἄνευ πολιτείας. *Eth.* 6. 8. 1142, a 9.

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